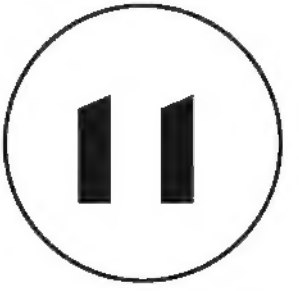
11
SUZUKA
KOUJI SEO

SUZUKA



Kouji Seo

TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY
David Ury

LETTERED BY
North Market Street Graphics

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Suzuka 11

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A Note from the Author

AT LAST, SUZUKA HAS MADE IT TO ITS SECOND ANNIVERSARY! WE MADE IT THIS FAR ONLY BECAUSE OF ALL YOU LOYAL SUZUKA READERS OUT THERE. I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG THE SERIES WILL LAST, BUT I'LL DO MY BEST, SO I HOPE YOU'LL KEEP READING!!

Honorifics Explained

Throughout the Del Rey Manga books, you will find Japanese honorifics left intact in the translations. For those not familiar with how the Japanese use honorifics and, more important, how they differ from American honorifics, we present this brief overview.

Politeness has always been a critical facet of Japanese culture. Ever since the feudal era, when Japan was a highly stratified society, use of honorifics—which can be defined as polite speech that indicates relationship or status—has played an essential role in the Japanese language. When addressing someone in Japanese, an honorific usually takes the form of a suffix attached to one's name (example: "Asuna-san"), is used as a title at the end of one's name, or appears in place of the name itself (example: "Negi-sensei," or simply "Sensei!").

Honorifics can be expressions of respect or endearment. In the context of manga and anime, honorifics give insight into the nature of the relationship between characters. Many English translations leave out these important honorifics and therefore distort the feel of the original Japanese. Because Japanese honorifics contain nuances that English honorifics lack, it is our policy at Del Rey not to translate them. Here, instead, is a guide to some of the honorifics you may encounter in Del Rey Manga.

-san: This is the most common honorific and is equivalent to Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. It is the all-purpose honorific and can be used in any situation where politeness is required.

-sama: This is one level higher than "-san" and is used to confer great respect.

-dono: This comes from the word "tono," which means "lord." It is an even higher level than "-sama" and confers utmost respect.

-kun: This suffix is used at the end of boys' names to express familiarity or endearment. It is also sometimes used by men among friends, or when addressing someone younger or of a lower station.

-chan: This is used to express endearment, mostly toward girls. It is also used for little boys, pets, and even among lovers. It gives a sense of childish cuteness.

Bozu: This is an informal way to refer to a boy, similar to the English terms "kid" and "squirt."

Sempai/ Senpai: This title suggests that the addressee is one's senior in a group or organization. It is most often used in a school setting, where underclassmen refer to their upperclassmen as "sempai." It can also be used in the workplace, such as when a newer employee addresses an employee who has seniority in the company.

Kohai: This is the opposite of "sempai" and is used toward underclassmen in school or newcomers in the workplace. It connotes that the addressee is of a lower station.

Sensei: Literally meaning "one who has come before," this title is used for teachers, doctors, or masters of any profession or art.

[blank]: This is usually forgotten in these lists, but it is perhaps the most significant difference between Japanese and English. The lack of honorific means that the speaker has permission to address the person in a very intimate way. Usually, only family, spouses, or very close friends have this kind of permission. Known as *yobisute*, it can be gratifying when someone who has earned the intimacy starts to call one by one's name without an honorific. But when that intimacy hasn't been earned, it can be very insulting.

SUZUKA

11

Kouji Seo

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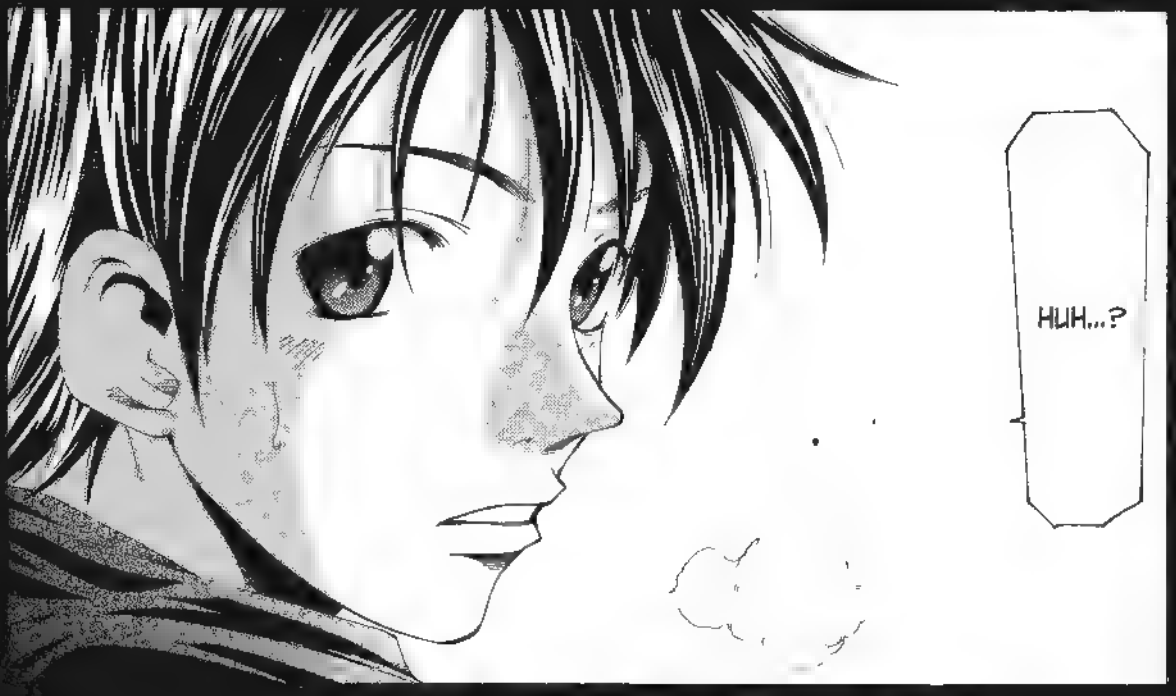
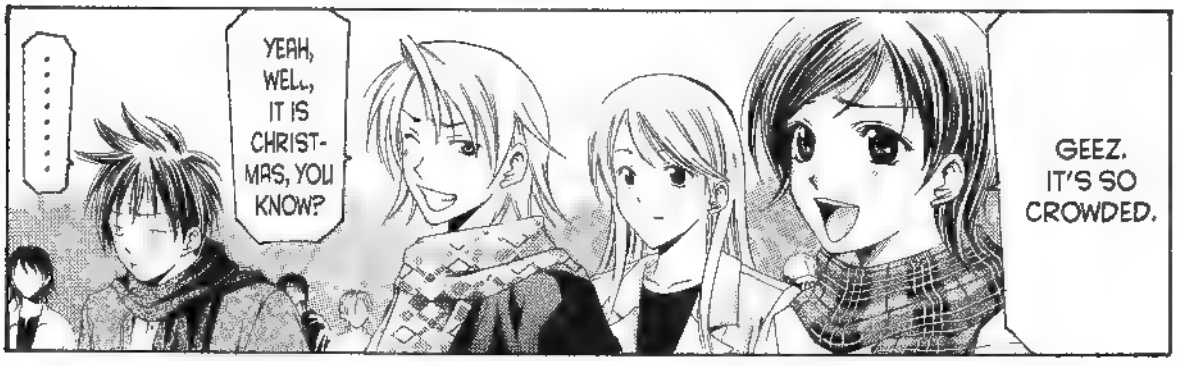
SO... HERE WE ARE!
ASKED YAMATO TO COME ALONG SINCE HE'S BEEN FEELING SO LONELY. HIS GIRLFRIEND WENT OFF TO A TRAINING CAMP!
.....
REALLY? ARE YOU SURE YOU DIDN'T JUST GET DUMPED RIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS EVE?
Y-YEAH, MAYBE HE DID.
I-I DID NOT.
EVERYTHING'S OKAY NOW, RIGHT?
WHAT...?
YOU MADE UP WITH HER, DIDN'T YOU?
AH... SORT OF...
HEY GUYS, QUIT STANDING AROUND. WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME.

SUZUKA

#88 Getting Closer



CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER


.....
YEAH, WELL, IT IS CHRIST-MAS, YOU KNOW?
GEEZ. IT'S SO CROWDED.

BUT...
THIS PLACE BRINGS BACK ALL SORTS OF BAD MEMO-RIES.

I HAD NO CHOICE. THE GIRLS WANTED TO COME HERE!
STUMP!
WHY THE HELL D D WE HAVE TO COME HERE OF ALL PLACES... ARE YOU TRYING TO POUR SALT ON MY WOUNDS OR SOMETHING?

ASAHINA AND I HAD OUR VERY FIRST DATE HERE...
SHE ALSO TOTALLY DUMPED ON ME HERE...

SHOULD I REALLY BE *HERE*... DOING *THIS*?
WELL, IT'S NOT LIKE THIS IS A DATE, I MEAN, I'M NOT CHEATING ON HER OR ANYTHING...
WHAT'S WRONG?
ニコッ
GRIN
YOU LOOK... WORRIED.
N-NO...
IT'S NOTHING.

OH, REALLY?
SH-SHUT UP. WHAT ARE YOU EVEN TALKING ABOUT!?
WHAT!?
I DON'T KNOW... I JUST NEVER HAD MUCH LUCK WITH THIS PLACE...
THE LAST TIME I WAS HERE IT RAINED.... AND...
HUH...? WELL... IT'S JUST THAT...
WHAT AM I SAYING...? WE ALL CAME HERE TO HAVE A GOOD TIME AND I'M RUIN-ING IT...
I-I'M SORRY...
.....
UH-HUH...
WHA!?
YANK

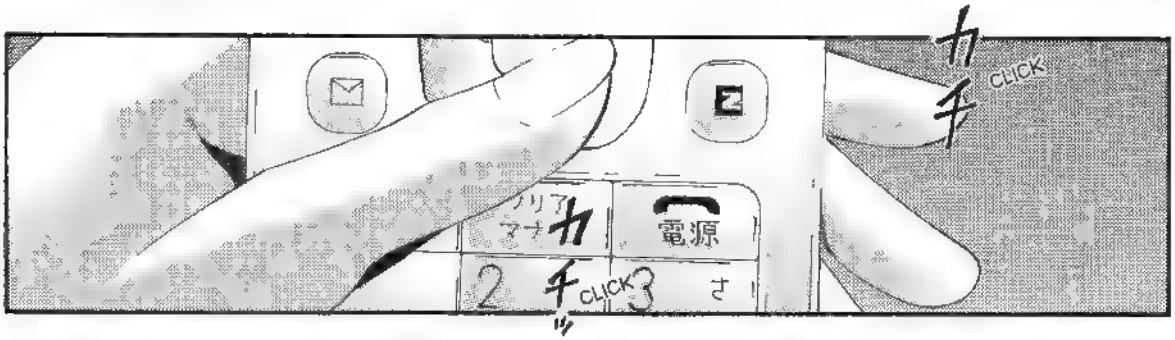
WELL, HOW ABOUT WE GET BUSY AND START MAKING SOME GOOD MEMORIES FOR YOU.
THEN I'LL FORGIVE YOU FOR TRYING TO RUN ON OUR PARADE.
AH...
A-ALL RIGHT...
Y-YEAH! THAT'S A GOOD IDEA!!
YEAH. WE CAME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE, SO...
WATCH WHAT YOU SAY, YOU IDIOT!
GLARE
S-SORRY

COME ON, HURRY UP!
EVERY-BODY'S ALREADY IN LINE!
ALL RIGHT...
I GUESS SHE'S RIGHT.
WE CAME ALL THE WAY HERE TO HAVE FUN.
ALL RIGHT, I'M GONNA GO ON EVERY SIN-GLE RIDE THERE IS.
DON'T PUSH YOUR-SELF TOO HARD.
HEH HEH. THAT'S THE SPIRIT, YAMATO-KUN!
I'VE GOTTA QUIT SULKING AND START ENJOYING MYSELF.

ALL RIGHT. THAT'S IT FOR TODAY, EVERY-BODY!
OKAY!

To:
I'M SO SORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED THE OTHER DAY. I MISSED YOUR CALL AND THEN I TOTALLY FORGOT TO BUY A CAKE...IT WAS ALL MY FAULT!! PLEASE DON'T BE ANGRY!! I'M REALLY SORRY!!
END

OKAY, FINE. I GUESS I SHOULD JUST...


カチ CLICK
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001
YAMATO AKITSUKI

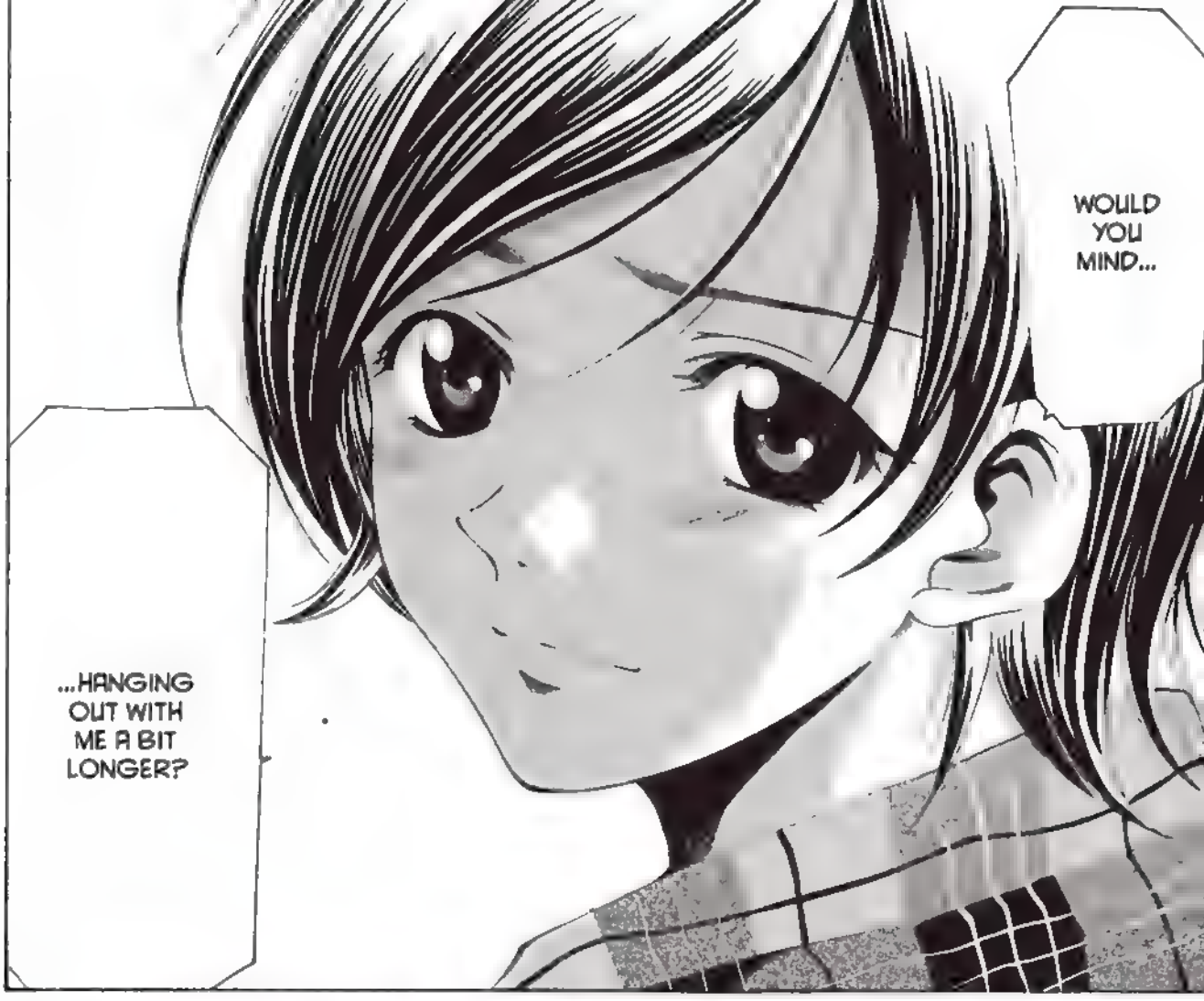
ISHI

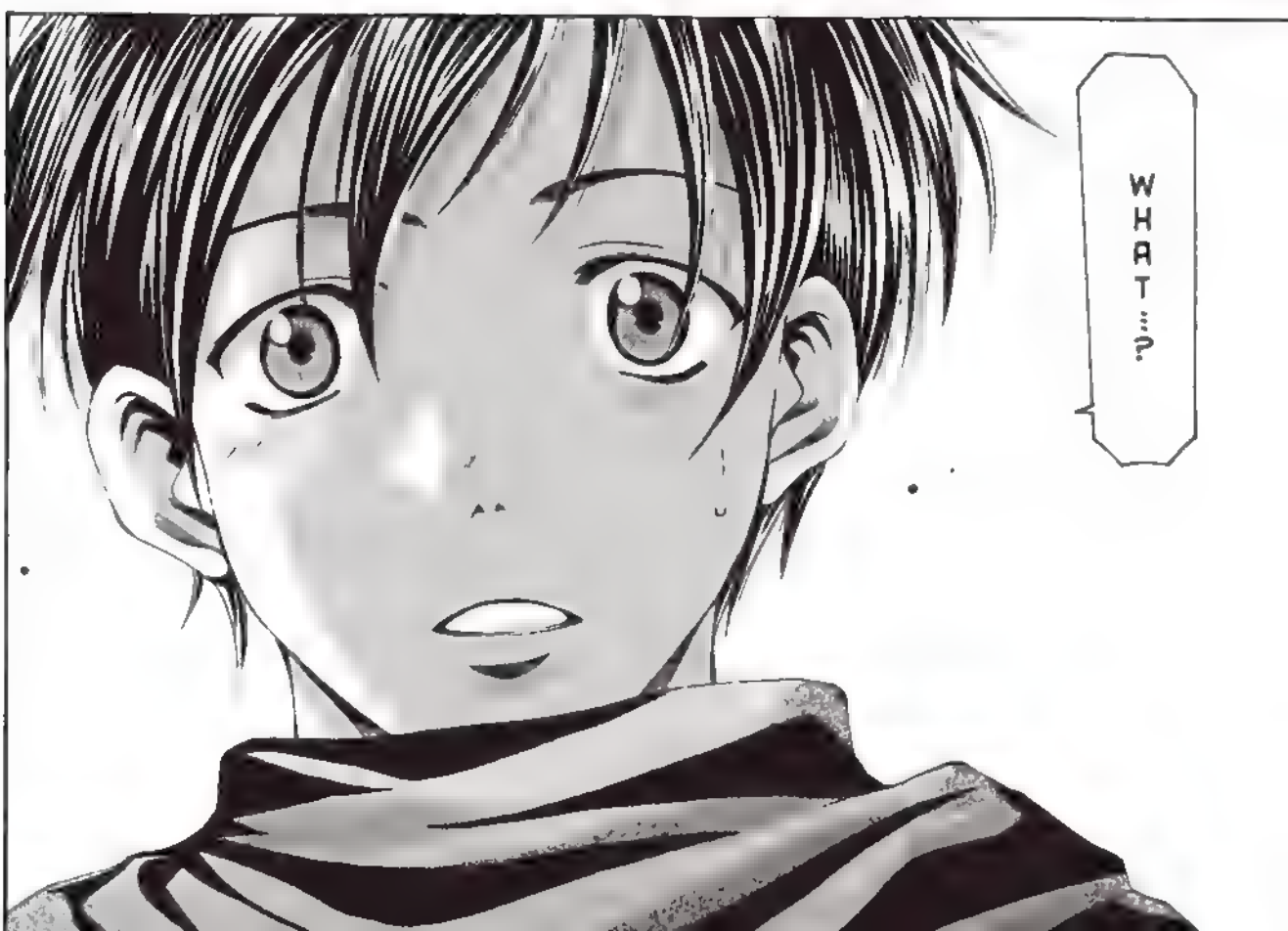
SHI
HEY YOU HAVEN'T FINISHED CLEANING UP YET
QUIT SLACKING OFF

WHY'D YOU EVEN BOTHER COMING HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE?
SHI
NISHI
.....
WOOSH
HMMPH...

MAN, THAT WAS SO MUCH FUN.
YEAH, MY FEET ARE SORE FROM WALKING ALL DAY.
WE'D BETTER HEAD ON HOME. I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO DO AFTER THIS, SO...
WAAH
WAAH
SOMETHING TO DO? WHAT DO YOU MEAN? YOU HAVE ANOTHER DATE LINED UP OR SOMETHING?
EXACTLY
N-NO, IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT!!
MY GRANDPA IS REALLY SICK!! I'M NOT KIDDING!!
UH-HUH, WELL, WHATEVER. I'M CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS WITH MY FAMILY TONIGHT ANYWAY...
YEAH, RIGHT? THAT SOUNDS PRETTY SUSPICIOUS, TOO.
.....
WHAT? I-I'M TELLING THE TRUTH!

.....
WHAT!?
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'RE SO QUIET.
WHAT...? NO, NOT REALLY...
DO YOU HAVE PLANS AFTER THIS, TOO, YAMATO-KUN...?
UMMM...
CLOP
コツ
WELL.
WHY?


WOULD YOU MIND...
...HANGING OUT WITH ME A BIT LONGER?


WHAT...?

UH...
BUT...
OH...NO, NO!! I DON'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT...
PLUP
I JUST THOUGHT THAT AS LONG AS WE'RE HERE...
O-OH...
WE MIGHT AS WELL CATCH THE NIGHT PARADE BEFORE HEADING BACK.
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING? C'MON, WE'RE LEAVING.
HURRY UP.

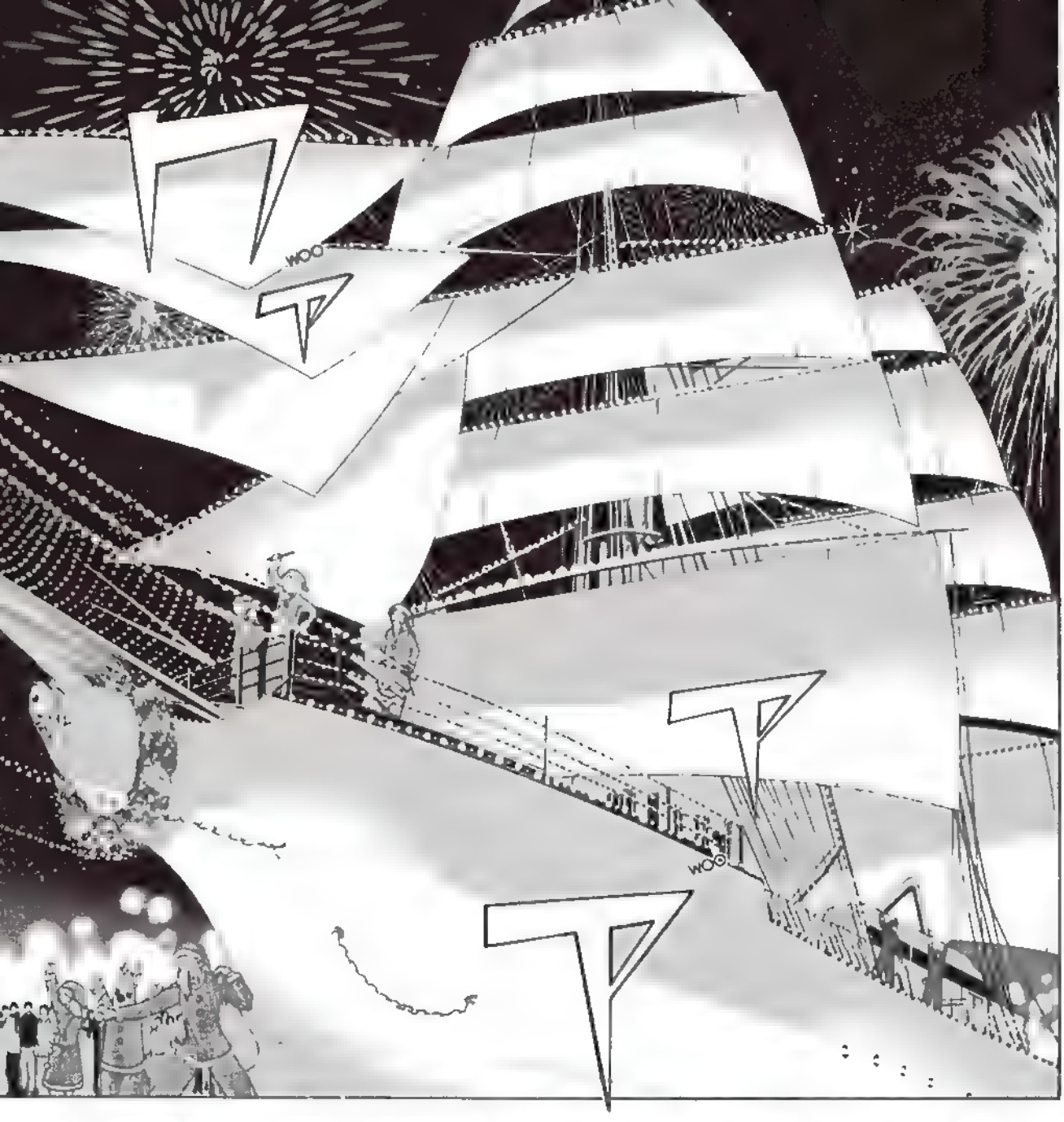
I CAN'T EITHER...
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO? I CAN'T STAY, BUT...
THE NIGHT PARADE?
HEY. I WANNA WATCH THE NIGHT PARADE BEFORE I GO HOME.
SEE YOU GUYS LATER! DON'T STAY OUT TOO LATE.
HEY
SORRY
NO, IT'S OKAY. TAKE CARE.
W-WHAT?
I HAVE AN IDEA! WHY DON'T YOU STAY WITH HER, YAMATO. YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO ANYWAY.
.....

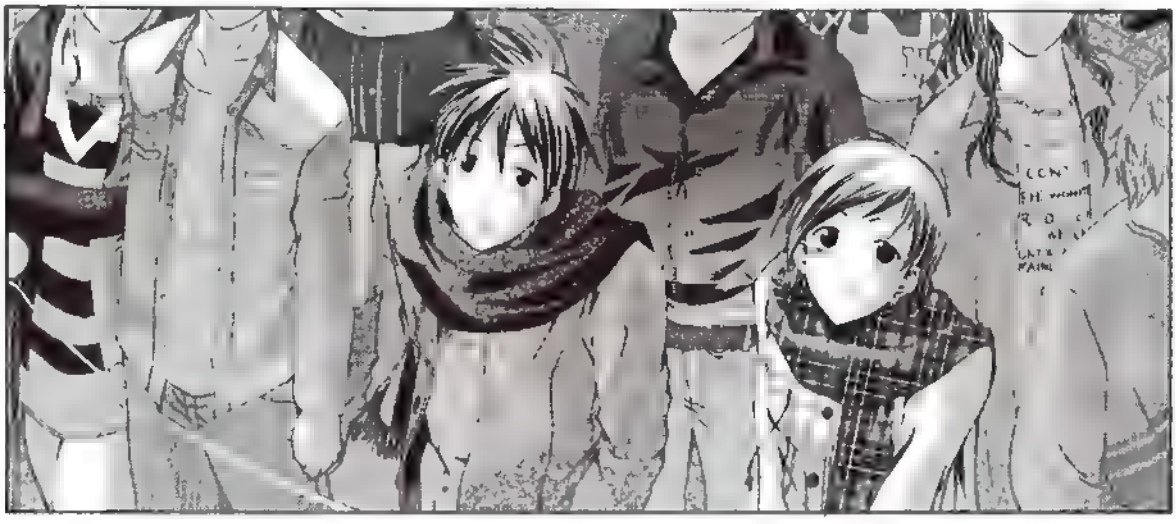
NO, IT'S...
SORRY FOR MAKING YOU DO THIS...
...EVEN THOUGH YOU HAVE A GIRLFRIEND.
BUT, REALLY... I JUST WANNA SEE THE PARADE, AND THEN I'LL GO HOME...
SO YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO TELL YOUR GIRL-FRIEND, OKAY!?
ACTU-ALLY...
...I DID SEE IT, BUT...
BESIDES, YAMATO-KUN. YOU SAID IT RAINED THE LAST TIME YOU CAME HERE...
SO I BET YOU DIDN'T GET TO SEE THE PARADE, RIGHT?
UH...

O-OKAY...
COME ON! LET'S GO WATCH IT.
IT'S REALLY PRETTY.
SH- SHOULD I BE DOING THIS?
I MEAN...THIS COULD GET OUTTA HAND...

H-HEY... WAIT, YUI-CHAN!
COME ON, HURRY! IT'S STARTING!
SUZUKA

#89 Memories
SUZUKA


WOO
WOO

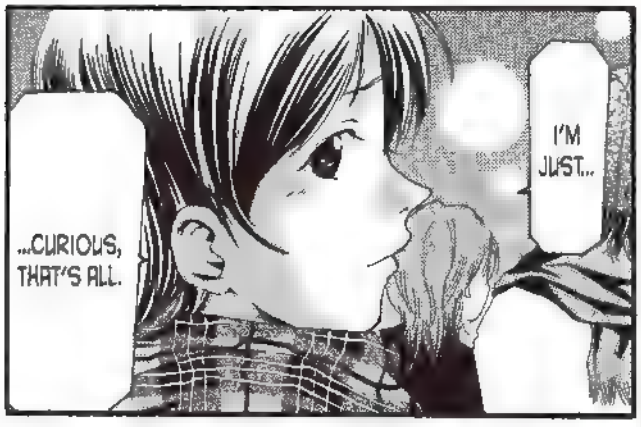


LOOK! LOOK! ISN'T IT PRETTY!
WOW! IT'S SO AMAZING!!
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
WOO
WOO

WOW. ACTUALLY IT IS MY FIRST TIME SEEING IT THIS CLOSE UP.
IT'S REALLY PRETTY...
SEE? AREN'T YOU GLAD YOU STAYED?
YEAH...I GUESS.
BUT WHEN YOU'RE THIS CLOSE, YOU CAN REALLY SEE HOW DIRTY THEIR COSTUMES ARE.
DON'T SAY STUFF LIKE THAT. YOU'RE RUIN-ING THE MOOD!
HA HA, SORRY.

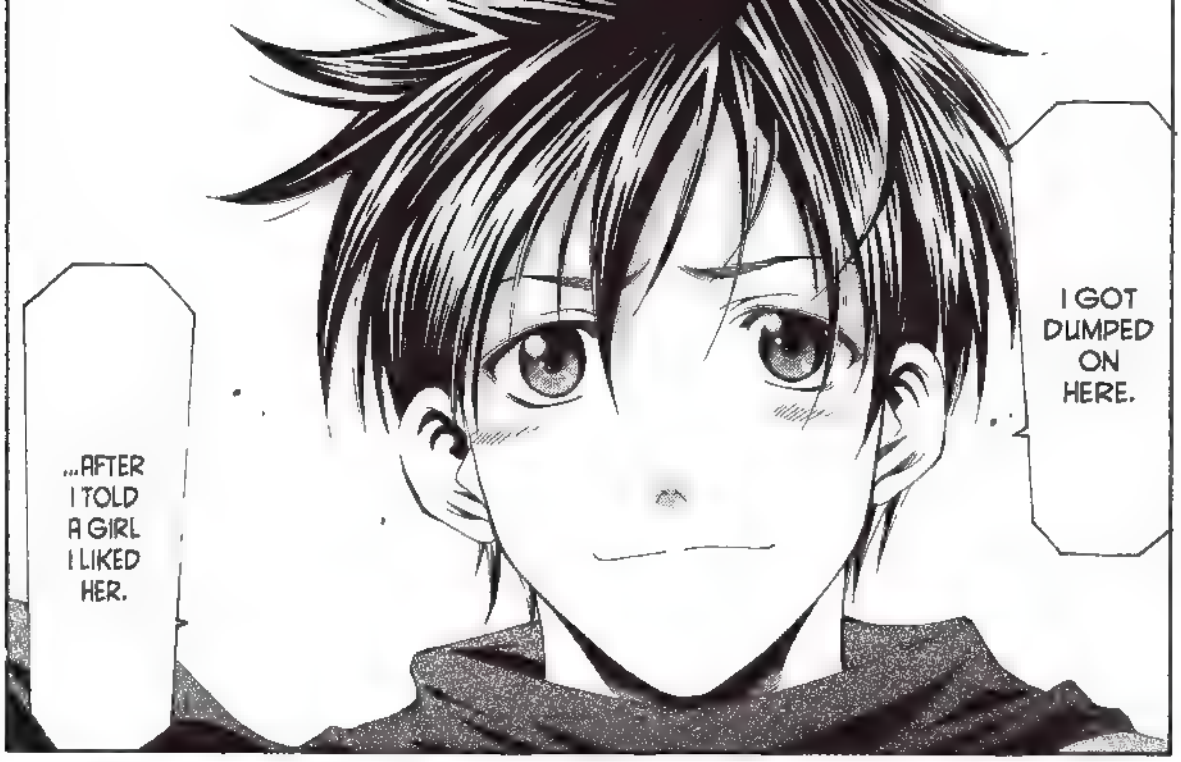
HEY, YAMATO-KUN.
WHAT...?

WHAT HAP-PENED?
YOU SAID THAT YOU NEVER HAD ANY LUCK WITH THIS PLACE...


I'M JUST...
...CURIOUS, THAT'S ALL.

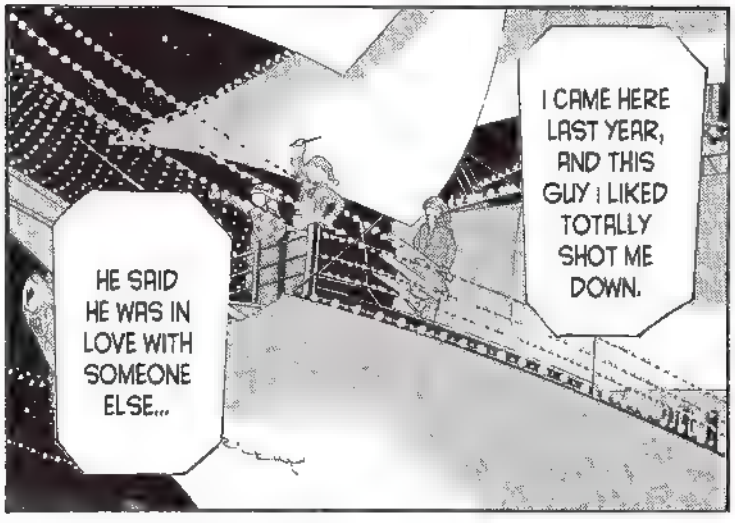
UH... WELL... IT'S...
KNOW IT RAINED WHEN YOU WERE HERE LAST TIME, BUT THAT DOESN'T RE-ALLY EXPLAIN WHY YOU HATE THIS PLACE SO MUCH.

.....
WELL... UH...


I GOT DUMPED ON HERE.
...AFTER I TOLD A GIRL I LIKED HER.

WHAT!?
IT'S JUST THAT... THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED TO ME.

REALLY!? ARE YOU SERIOUS!?
AH... YEAH... IS IT REALLY THAT SURPRISING?


I CAME HERE LAST YEAR, AND THIS GUY I LIKED TOTALLY SHOT ME DOWN.
HE SAID HE WAS IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE ELSE...

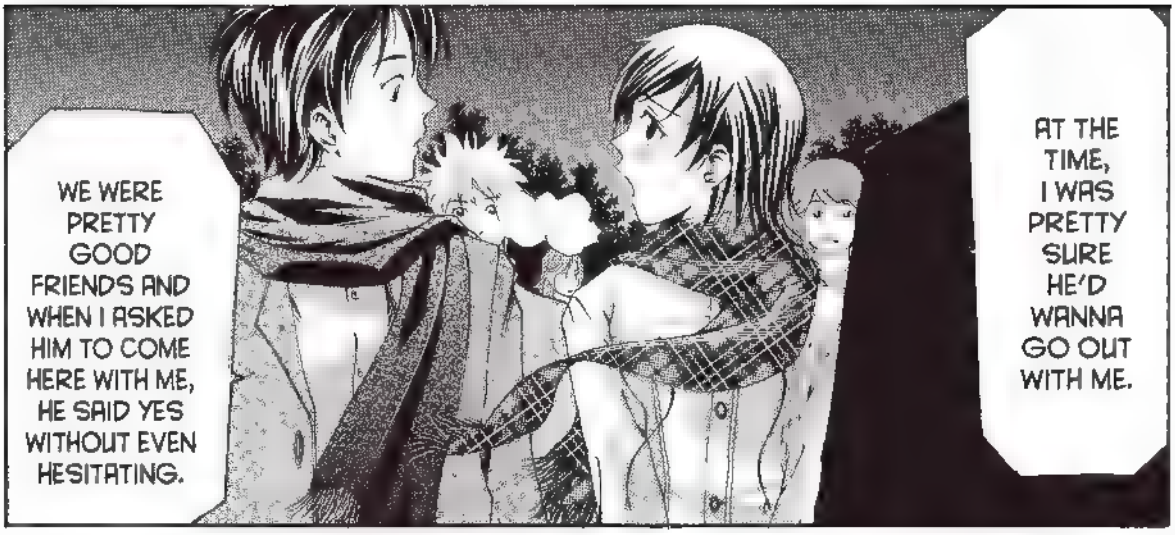
BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANNA LET THAT ONE BAD MEMORY RUIN THINGS FOR ME.
I MEAN, THIS IS SUCH A FUN PLACE, YOU KNOW!

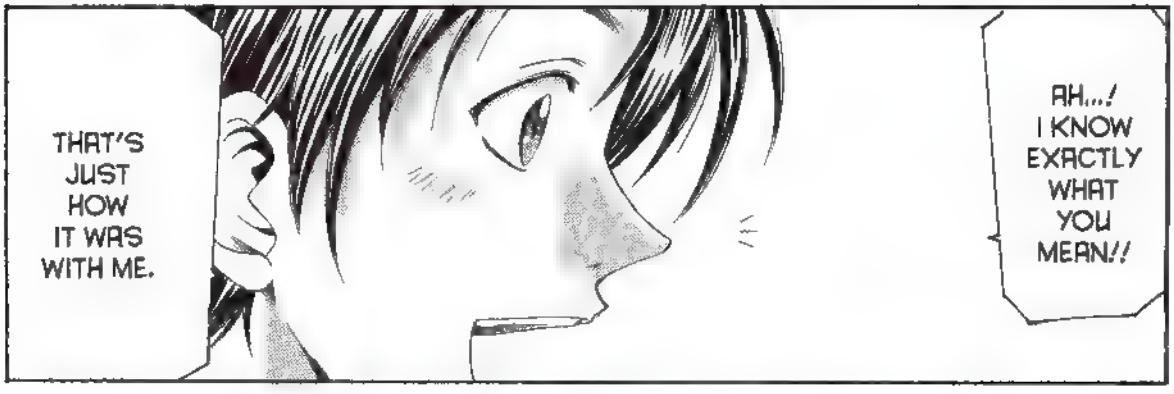
SO...I DIDN'T REALLY HAVE GOOD MEMORIES OF THIS PLACE EITHER.
HUH? THEN WHY DID YOU COME HERE AGAIN...?

SO I DECIDED...
...THAT I'D HAVE TONS OF FUN TODAY, AND FORGET ABOUT THE PAST.

HUH? SO... I GUESS WE'RE IN THE SAME BOAT.
HEH-HEH GUESS YOU COULD SAY THAT

YOU'VE GOT A REALLY GREAT ATTITUDE, YUI-CHAN...


WE WERE PRETTY GOOD FRIENDS AND WHEN I ASKED HIM TO COME HERE WITH ME, HE SAID YES WITHOUT EVEN HESITATING.
AT THE TIME, I WAS PRETTY SURE HE'D WANNA GO OUT WITH ME.


THAT'S JUST HOW IT WAS WITH ME.
AH...! I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU MEAN!!

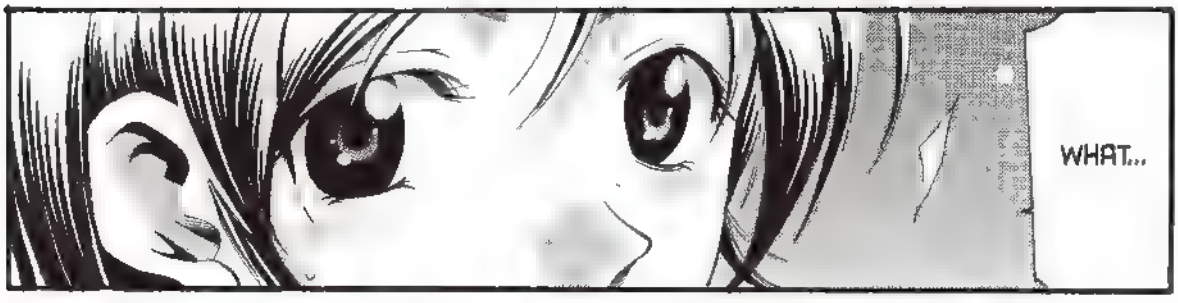
UH-HUH.
WHEN THEY ACT LIKE THAT, IT TOTALLY MAKES YOU THINK THEY FEEL THE SAME WAY YOU DO.

WE FOUGHT A LOT AND...
...SHE CAN BE TOUGH TO GET ALONG WITH SOMETIMES, BUT SHE HAS A SOFT SIDE, TOO...
THINK I'M FALLING IN LOVE WITH YOU.

THE TRAIN RIDE HOME WAS SO AWKWARD. WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO EACH OTHER.
YEAH. BUT WHEN I TOLD HER HOW I FELT, SHE GOT ALL COLD
OH, HATE THAT. IT FEELS LIKE THE RIDE TAKES FOREVER WHEN STUFF LIKE THAT HAPPENS
AND YOU START TO WISH YOU'D JUST TAKEN A DIFFERENT TRAIN
YEAH, TOTALLY
THE NEXT DAY SHE WOULDN'T EVEN TALK TO ME AT SCHOOL.
BUT IT'S NOT LIKE I COULD SUDDENLY START HATING HER JUST BECAUSE SHE DON'T WANNA GO OUT WITH ME
YEAH.
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.

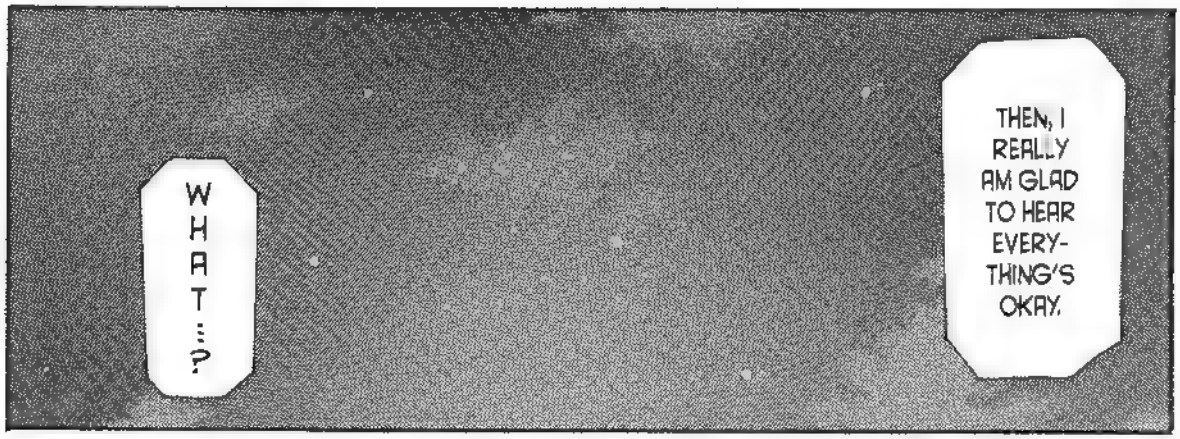
JUST BECAUSE YOU GET DUMPED ON ONCE, DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO GIVE UP HOPE!
BUT...
I JUST COULDN'T GIVE UP ON HER.
EVEN THOUGH I KNEW SHE WAS IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE ELSE...
I EVEN TRIED TELLING HER I LIKED HER A SECOND TIME, BUT SHE JUST DUMPED ON ME AGAIN.
IF YOU LIKE SOMEONE, THEN THERE'S NOT MUCH YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT.

BUT IN THE END...
I FINALLY GOT TO BE WITH HER!

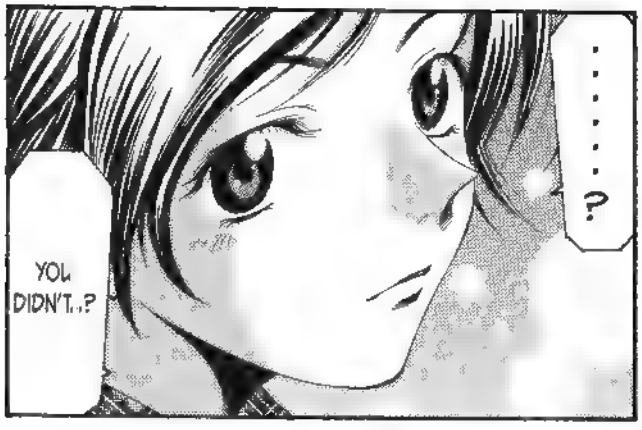

WHAT...

WOW!
THAT'S REALLY AMAZ-ING!!

Y-YOU MEAN THAT'S THE GIRL YOU'RE SEEING NOW!?
Y-YEAH...


THEN, I REALLY AM GLAD TO HEAR EVERY-THING'S OKAY.
WHAT...?

.....

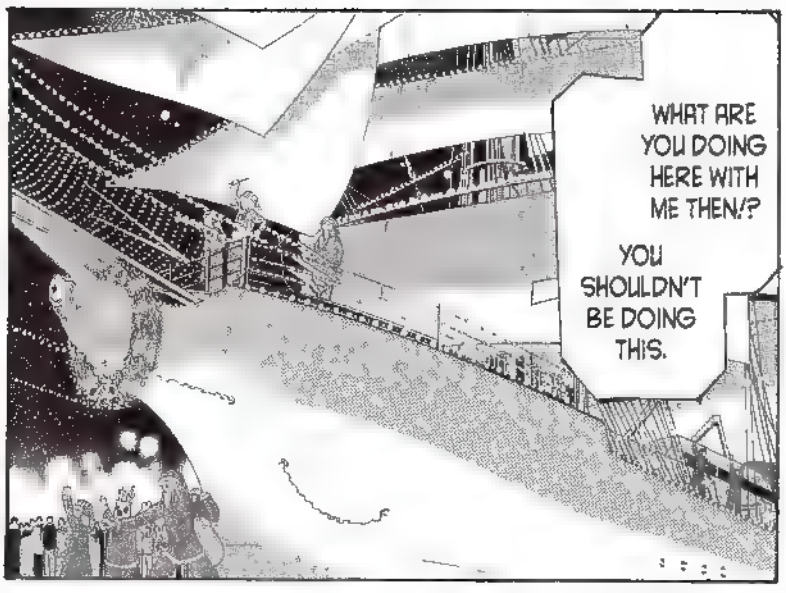

.....?
YOU DIDN'T..?

I MEAN, YOU MADE UP WITH HER, RIGHT?

NOT...
...YET.

WHAT...!?
B-BUT YOU SAID...

...YOU'RE RIGHT...
...SHOULDN'T BE.


WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE WITH ME THEN!?
YOU SHOULDN'T BE DOING THIS.

I'VE GOTTA GO FIND HER...
...RIGHT NOW!

...YEAH
GO TO HER...
I'M REALLY SORRY...
NO, I HAD FUN.
NOW THIS PLACE ISN'T JUST FULL OF...
...BAD MEMORIES.
.....
YEAH.

ALL RIGHT, TAKE CARE.
I'M REALLY SORRY! I'VE GOTTA GO!!
YAMATO-KUN HAS A MUCH MORE POSITIVE ATTITUDE THAN I DO.
HE AND I...
ARE TWO TOTALLY DIFFERENT PEOPLE

THE PARADE IS OVER

SUZUKA

#90 True Feelings

ASAHINA-SAN, WOULD YOU MIND CLOSING THE CUR-TAINS?
OH, DON'T MIND SO MUCH.
WHAT THE--?
WHAT'S WRONG?

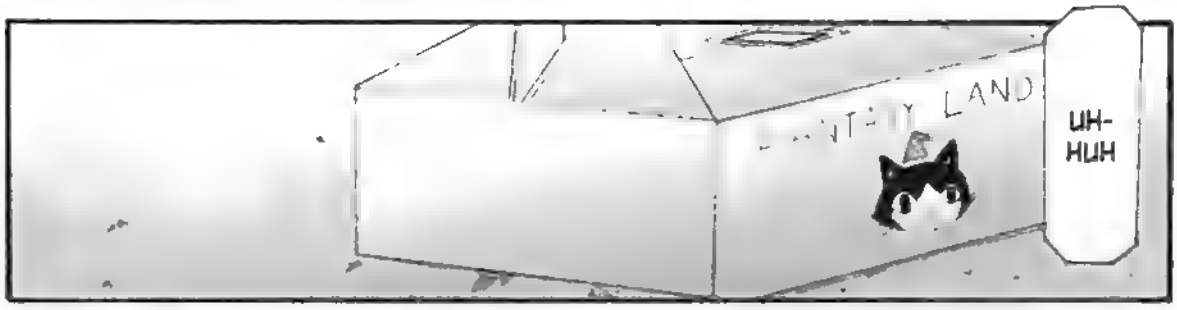
ヒョオオ

HEY...
AH... ASAHINA!

WHAT...
I... JUST...

...WHAT DO YOU WANT?
YOU'RE EMBAR-RASSING ME...

I BROUGHT YOU SOME CAKE!!
FANTASY LAND
AH... THIS IS FOR YOU!!
WHAT...?
...WANTED TO KNOW...
...HOW YOU'RE TRAIN-ING WAS GOING...
PLINK
UH...
BOUGHT OUTSIDE OF FANTASY LAND...
DRIP
DRIP
HUH, UH, I DON'T KNOW... THAT'S WEIRD...
WHY DO YOU HAVE CAKE FROM FANTASY LAND?
NTASY LAND
WHAT...!?
LET'S GO SOME-WHERE.
DON'T WANT ANYBODY TO SEE US TOGETHER.
AH... OKAY..


UH-HUH

AND THEN YOU FELT GUILTY, SO...
YOU DECIDED TO COME OUT HERE?

N-NO THAT'S NOT HOW IT IS...
I MEAN...

SO HATTORI-KUN ASKED YOU TO COME ALONG AGAIN AND YOU JUST HAD NO CHOICE...
YEAH.
...BUT TO GO OUT WITH THAT SAME GIRL WHO WAS ALL OVER YOU THE OTHER NIGHT...AND THEN YOU TWO WATCHED THE PARADE TO-GETHER...?
YEAH.

SO I WENT TO THE THEME PARK HOPING I WOULD TAKE MY MIND OFF OF EVERY THING...
I THOUGHT I WOULD GO CRAZY IF I STAYED HOME...
I WAS WORRIED BECAUSE YOU NEVER REPLIED TO ME!
AND I DIDN'T WANT THIS TO BE THE END OF US.
BUT WHILE I WAS THERE, I KEPT THINKING ABOUT YOU...
WHAT!
DO YOU ACTUALLY EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT STORY?
SO... I JUST FELT LIKE REALLY NEEDED TO SEE YOU.
THAT'S NOT TRUE!!
YOU JUST WANTED TO SEE THAT GIRL, DIDN'T YOU?

I DON'T EVEN THINK OF HER LIKE THAT...
AND SHE JUST WANTED TO HANG OUT, THAT'S ALL!!
OKAY, LET'S JUST SAY THAT I DID BELIEVE YOUR STORY!!
WHAT GIRL WOULDN'T BE PISSED AFTER FINDING SOME CHICK HANGING ALL OVER HER BOYFRIEND.
I'M...
=SORRY=
AND AS IF THAT WEREN'T BAD ENOUGH, YOU GO OUT WITH HER AGAIN?
THAT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH!!
YOUR BULLSHIT APOLO-GIES ONLY MAKE ME EVEN MORE MAD!!

I WAS WORRIED TOO, YOU KNOW!!
YOU THINK I'M HAPPY?
I'M SICK OF IT.
I HATE THAT ABOUT YOU!!
...AND YOU ALWAYS JUST GO ALONG WITH WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY...!!
YOU'RE ALL TALK...
YOU JUST DON'T GET IT, DO YOU!!?
JESUS, ARE YOU EVEN LISTEN-ING TO ME?
WHAT...
I DON'T BLAME YOU FOR HAT NG ME.
I'M SORRY... I KNOW.

.....!

.....

ASAHINA...
STING

THE REASON I'M SO ANGRY...
...IS BECAUSE I CAN'T HATE YOU...!

I CAN'T HATE YOU...
DRP
DRP
BUT...
I CAN'T JUST FORGIVE YOU EITHER.
SNFF
AH...I'M SORRY...
I'M REALLY SORRY...!
I'LL NEVER BULLSHIT YOU EVER AGAIN!
AND I'LL NEVER MAKE YOU CRY AGAIN... SO PLEASE...
.....

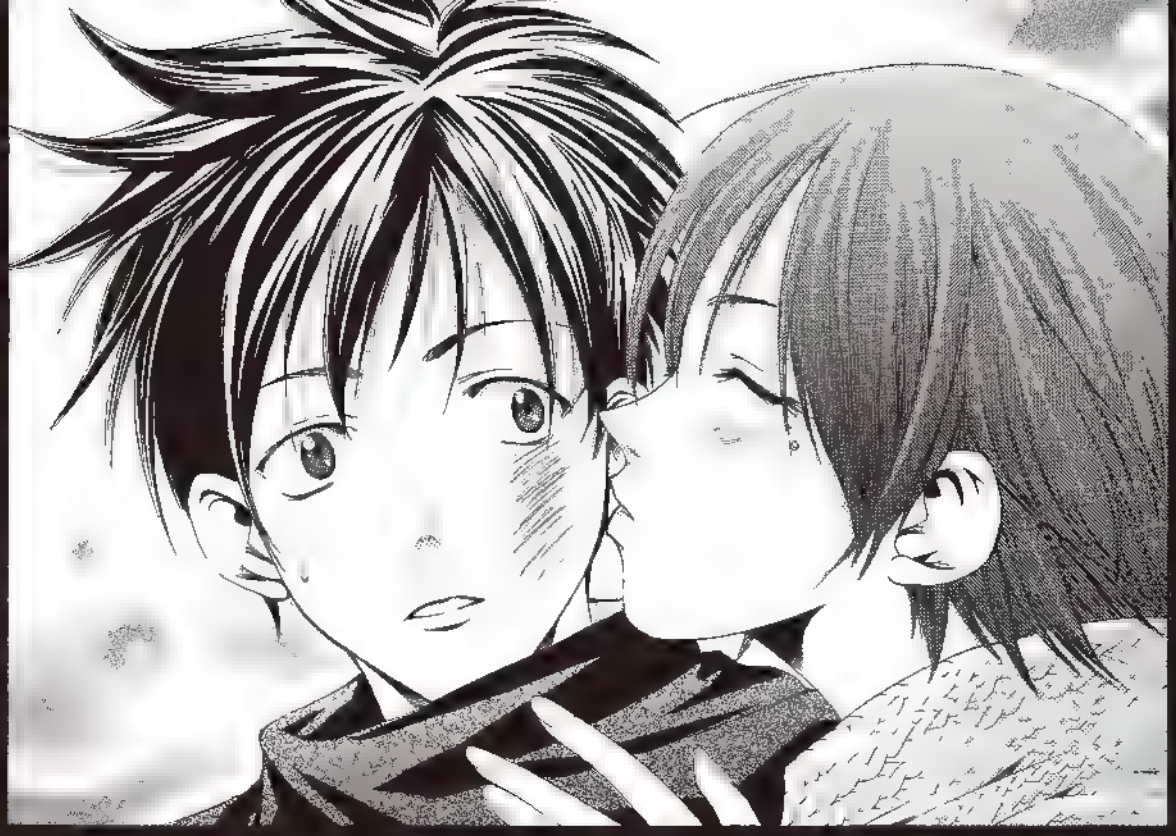
I DON'T KNOW WHAT ELSE TO SAY
THOSE EMPTY WORDS AREN'T GOOD ENOUGH
WELL, THEN, LET ME SMACK YOU AS HARD AS I CAN.
OTHERWISE I'M GONNA EXPLODE
WHAT!

IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER.
A-ALL RIGHT...
ALL RIGHT, HERE IT COMES.
HYAA
ARE YOU SURE...? I'M REALLY GONNA HIT YOU HARD, YOU KNOW?
I'M NOT GOING EASY ON YOU THIS TIME.
OKAY. GO AHEAD.
SWUP
.....!!
URRRMMMPH

WHAT...
WHA—!?
SMACK

YOU'RE SO USED TO GETTING HIT NOW THAT...
I HAVE TO COME UP WITH SPECIAL SNEAK ATTACKS OR IT WON'T EVEN AFFECT YOU.
IT HURTS MORE WHEN YOU'RE NOT EXPECTING IT.
AH...
WHA-!?
HUH?
TALK ABOUT THE CARROT AND THE STICK...
WOW...
I'M SORRY...
DO YOU REALLY GET WHAT I'M SAYING?
I DO!! I'M REALLY SORRY!!
I WAS ABOUT TO FORGIVE YOU, BUT I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WENT TO FANTASY LAND.
CAN'T YOU HANDLE BEING ALONE FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS?
.....

SORRY...
OKAY...
FINE, I'LL FORGIVE YOU, BUT...
DON'T EVER MAKE ME CRY AGAIN... OKAY?
I DIDN'T KNOW...
...THAT ASAHINA LOVED ME SO MUCH...
AH...
AS LONG AS YOU'RE HERE, I MIGHT AS WELL...
SHOCK
HUH? NOW WHAT...?



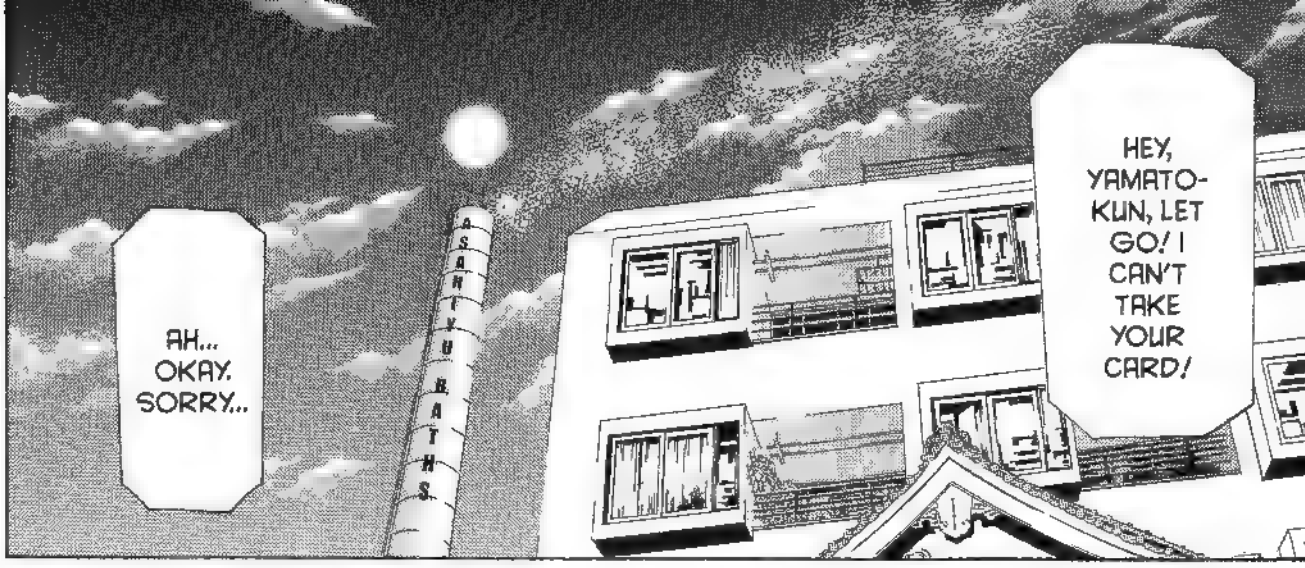
WHAT...?

THAT'S JUST MY WAY OF SAY-ING...
...THANKS FOR COMING ALL THE WAY OUT HERE.

TH-THANKS, BUT I'D PREFER ONE ON THE LIPS.
WHAT...? DON'T PUSH YOUR LUCK, PAL!
I'LL WHOOP YOUR BUTT!!

#91 A New Year's Shrine Visit

SUZUKA

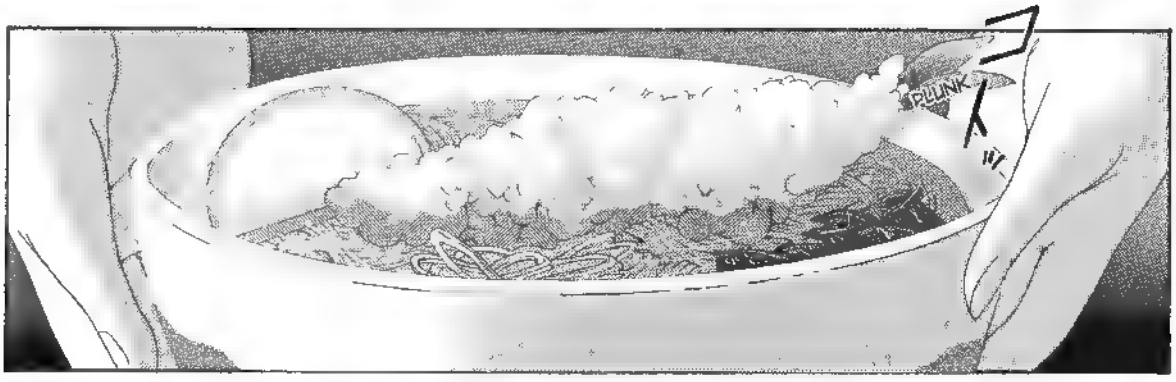

HEY, YAMATO-KUN, LET GO! I CAN'T TAKE YOUR CARD!
SANIYU BATHS
AH... OKAY. SORRY...

IS THAT REALLY YOU, YUUKA-SAN?
MAN...

W-WHAT...?
I HAD TO RE-DYE IT BLACK. IF MY DAD SAW ME WITH MY HAIR BLEACHED, HE'D KILL ME.
YOUR PARENTS MUST BE REALLY STRICT, YUUKA-SAN.
YOU TOTALLY WENT FROM WHITE TO BLACK.
CHATTER
CHATTER
IT LOOKS BETTER BLACK ANYWAY.
SHE SHOULD KEEP HER HAIR LIKE THAT, DON'T YOU THINK, GORO-CHAN?
MEOW
WILL YOU STOP STARING AT ME...?

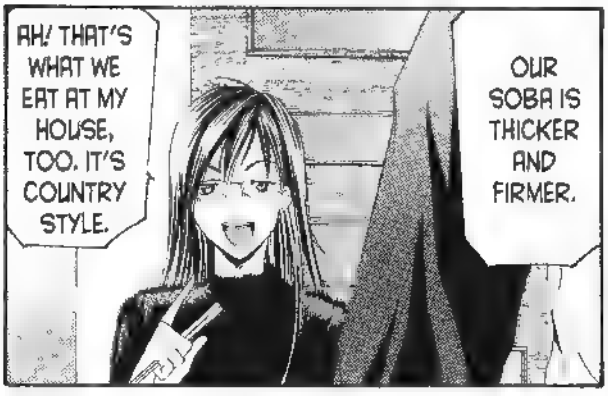
SH T!!
YOU JUST PICKED MY JOKER.
AH... I'LL GIVE YOU A HAND.
THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN WAIT-NG FOR!!
FLUP

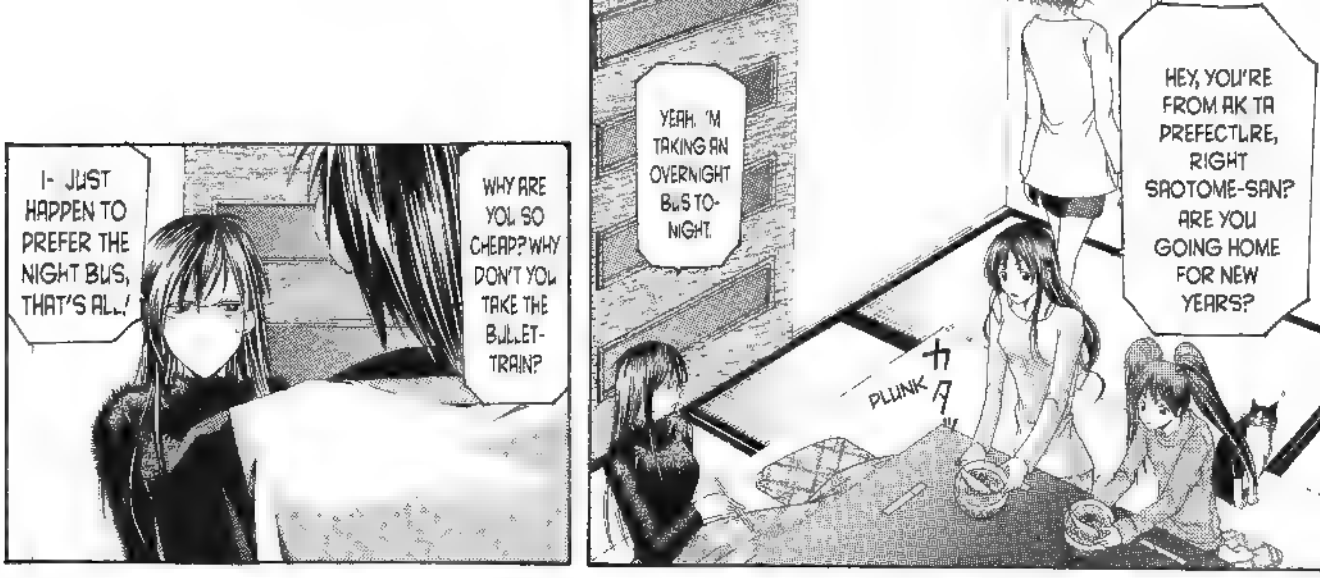
HERE YOU GO.
NEW YEAR'S EVE TOSH.KOSH NOODLES.


PLUNK

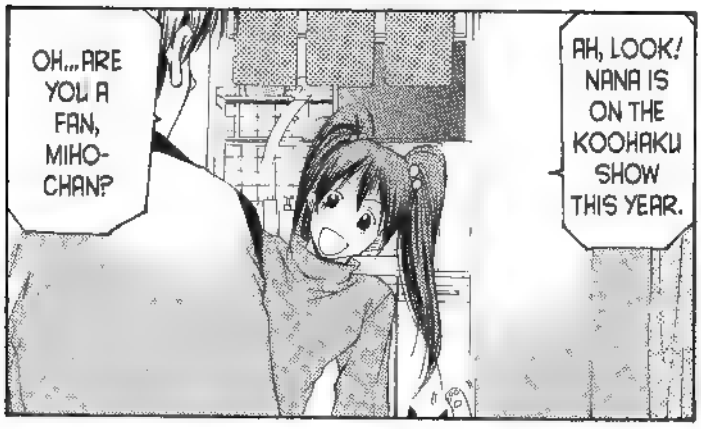
THESE NOODLES ARE TOO THIN.
WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT IT? THEY LOOK LIKE THE SAME KIND MY MOM ALWAYS MAKES.
FWIP

SORRY. THIS 'S TOKYO-STYLE SOBA.
HEY...AYANO-SAN. THESE SOBA NOO-DLES LOOK DIFFERENT FROM WHAT I USUALLY EAT BACK HOME.


AH! THAT'S WHAT WE EAT AT MY HOUSE, TOO. IT'S COUNTRY STYLE.
OUR SOBA IS THICKER AND FIRMER.

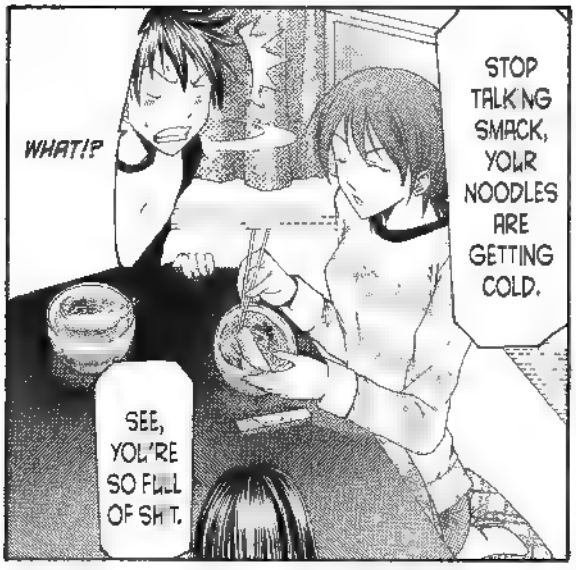

HEY, YOU'RE FROM AK TA PREFECTURE, RIGHT SAOTOME-SAN? ARE YOU GOING HOME FOR NEW YEARS?
YEAH. I'M TAKING AN OVERNIGHT BUS TONIGHT.
PLUNK
WHY ARE YOU SO CHEAP? WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THE BULLET-TRAIN?
I- JUST HAPPEN TO PREFER THE NIGHT BUS, THAT'S ALL.

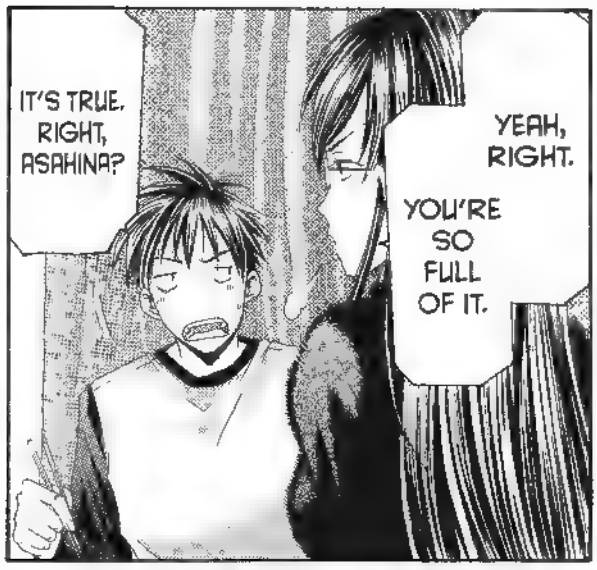
THE NIGHT BUSES ARE MORE CONVENIENT FOR SAOTOME-SAN, BECAUSE SHE LIVES WAY OUT IN THE BOONIES, RIGHT?
HEHHEH
DON'T MAKE FUN OF THE COUNTRY!!
SO YOU'RE FROM THE BOONIES LIKE ME?


AH, LOOK! NANA IS ON THE KOUHAKU SHOW THIS YEAR.
OH...ARE YOU A FAN, MIHO-CHAN?

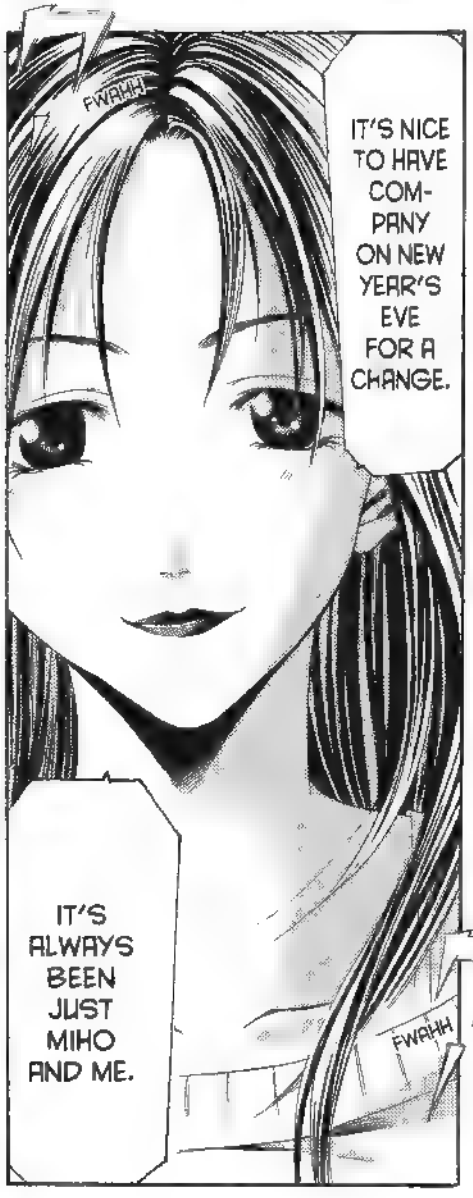
YEAH! SHE'S SO CUTE AND SHE'S A GOOD SINGER, TOO.
I WENT TO KARAOKE WITH HER ONCE, YOU KNOW?

I LOVE YOU, MY LOVE FOR YOU!
WAA
I CAN'T STOP LOVING YOU, YEAH, MY HEART SKIPS A BEAT..
WAA

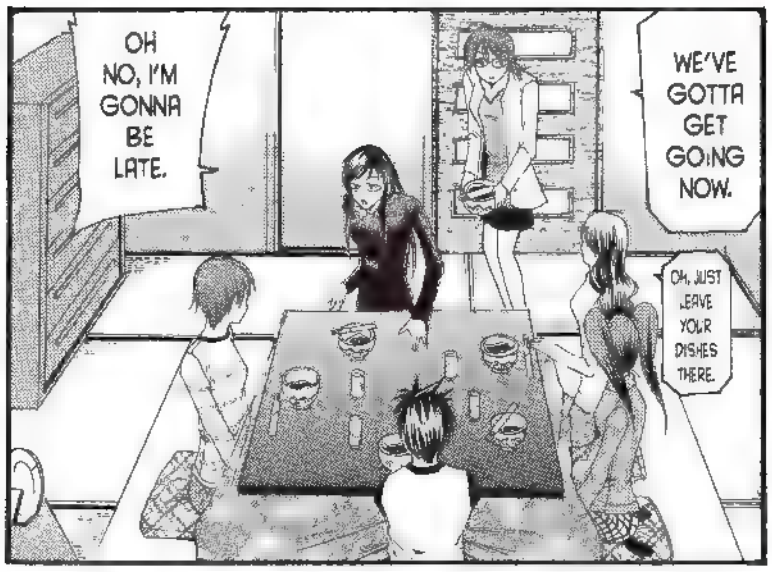

WHAT!?
STOP TALKING SMACK, YOUR NOODLES ARE GETTING COLD.
SEE, YOU'RE SO FULL OF SHIT.

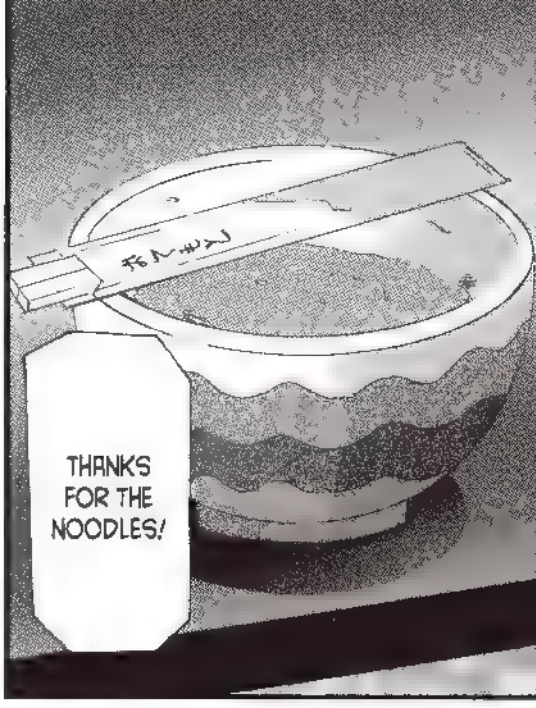

IT'S TRUE, RIGHT, ASAHINA?
YEAH, RIGHT.
YOU'RE SO FULL OF IT.

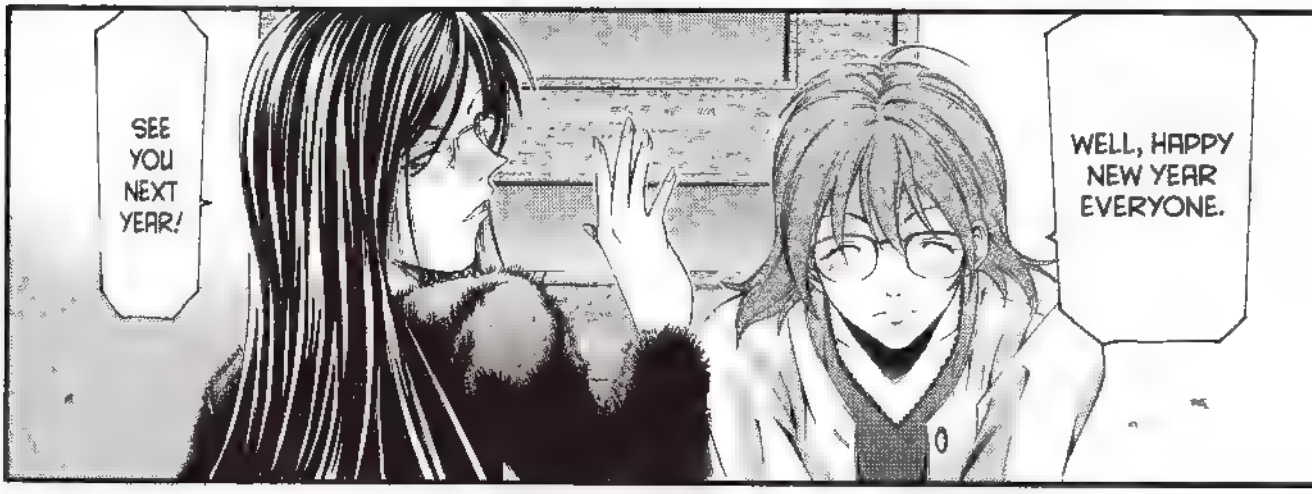
OH, THAT'S RIGHT. I'M SORRY.
YOU'RE FORGETTING GORO-CHAN.
MEOW.


FWAHH
IT'S NICE TO HAVE COMPANY ON NEW YEAR'S EVE FOR A CHANGE.
IT'S ALWAYS BEEN JUST MIHO AND ME.
FWAHH

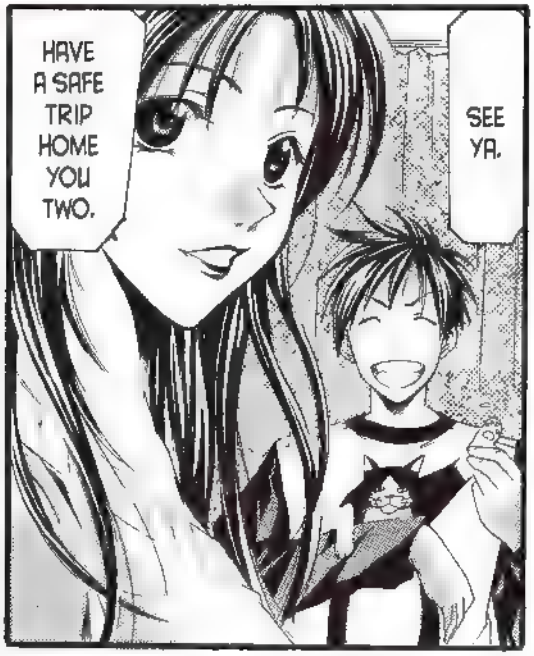
ASAHIYU BATHS.
WELL, AT MY HOUSE WE EAT THEM ON NEW YEAR'S EVE, TOO!!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DO THAT ON THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING.
WE'VE GOT TO EAT SOME TO WARD OFF THE EVIL SPIRITS.
HEY, AYANO-SAN, DO YOU HAVE ANY SARDINES?


OH NO, I'M GONNA BE LATE.
WE'VE GOTTA GET GOING NOW.
OH, JUST LEAVE YOUR DISHES THERE.


THANKS FOR THE NOODLES!


SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!
WELL, HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE.

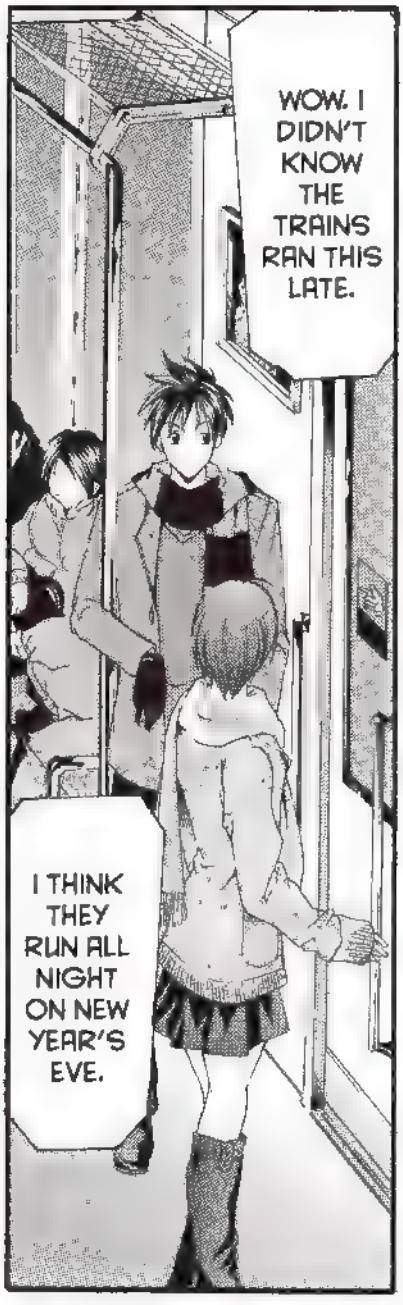
WHAT ARE YOU TALK-ING ABOUT? YOU'RE TOO YOUNG TO BE GOING OUT THIS LATE.
OH, YEAH.. I HAVE TO GET READY FOR OUR NEW YEAR'S SHRINE VIS T. MY FRIENDS'LL BE HERE SOON.


HAVE A SAFE TRIP HOME YOU TWO.
SEE YA.

THUMPA
THUMPA
YOU KNOW WHAT, I'LL JUST COME ALONG.
WHAT? NO WAY! YOU WANNA EMBARRASS ME TO DEATH?
I'M COMING AND THAT'S THAT!
ARE YOU SURE? THIS AREA'S BEEN GETTING MORE AND MORE DANGEROUS... I'LL BE WORRIED SICK IF YOU GO OUT.
I'LL BE FINE. I'M GOING WITH A BUNCH OF PEOPLE.
HUSH
WELL...
MAYBE WE SHOULD GO OUT AND DO OUR NEW YEAR'S SHRINE VISIT, TOO, HUH?
YEAH.
S-SUDDENLY IT'S ALL QUIET.
YEAH!
LET'S GO!

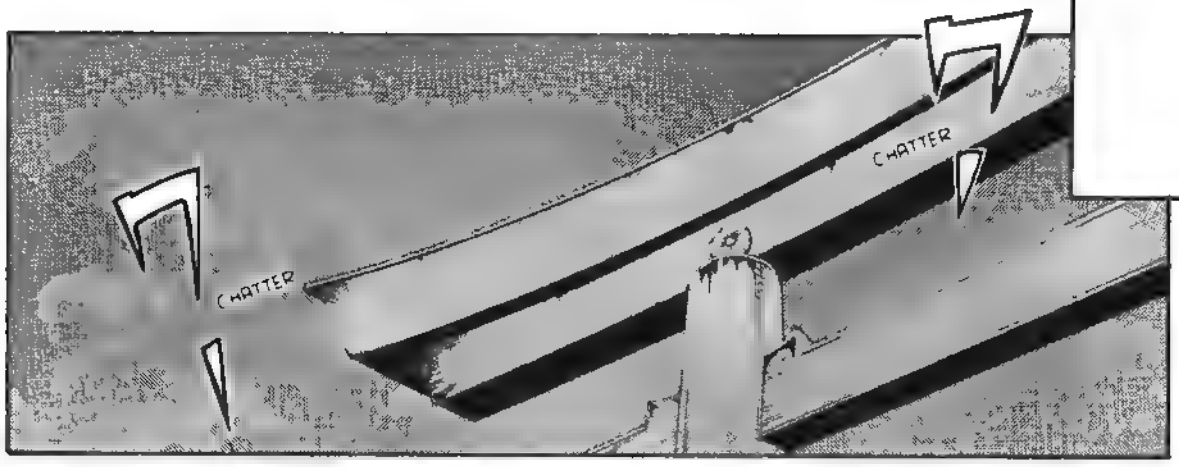
CLACK
CLACK
JR

YEAH. UNTIL LAST YEAR, I ALWAYS USED TO GO TO TSURUOKA HACHIMANGU SHRINE WITH MY FAMILY.
DO YOU VISIT A SHRINE ON EVERY NEW YEAR'S, ASAHINA?


WOW. I DIDN'T KNOW THE TRAINS RAN THIS LATE.
I THINK THEY RUN ALL NIGHT ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

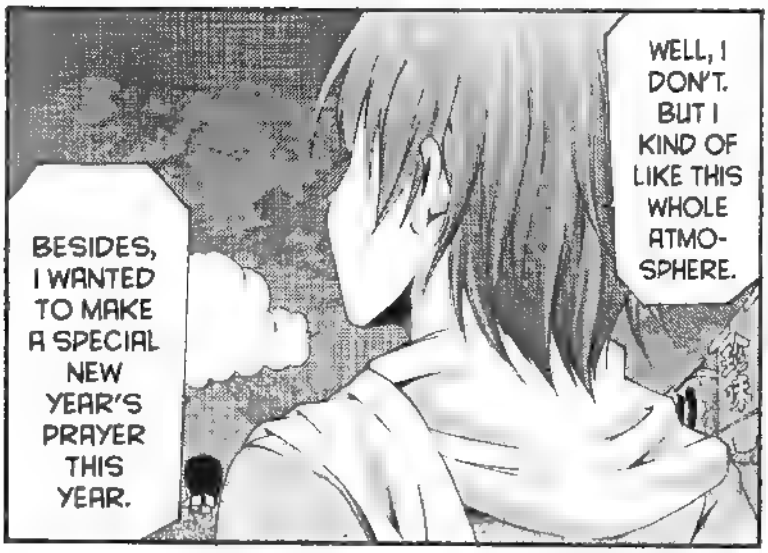
CLACK
CLACK
AND WE WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO TALK UNTIL AFTER MIDNIGHT. SO WE ONLY SPOKE A LITTLE BIT?
IT'D BE PITCH BLACK, AND THERE'D BE HARDLY ANYBODY OUT...
YEAH, I USED TO DO NEW YEAR'S SHRINE VISITS WITH MY FAMILY BACK HOME, TOO. THERE WAS ALWAYS LOTS OF SNOW AND IT WAS ALWAYS FREEZING.

PLEASE WATCH YOUR STEP AS YOU EXIT THE TRAIN.
THE NEXT STOP IS HARA-JUKU.
YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO TALK, BUT YOU DID ANY-WAY HOW LAME.
WE... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO KEEP QUIET FOR THAT LONG
YOU HAVE TO DO CHARADES EVERY TIME YOU WANNA SAY SOME-THING...
ザワ
ザワ
ザワ
R-REALLY...? WOW. TOKYO REALLY'S AMAZING
COME ON, LET'S GO.
QUIT STAND-ING AROUND
CANDY APPLES
CHATTER
IT'S LIKE THIS EVERY-WHERE ON NEW YEAR'S.
WOW!! LOOK AT ALL THESE PEOPLE. WHAT THE HELL?


CHATTER
CHATTER

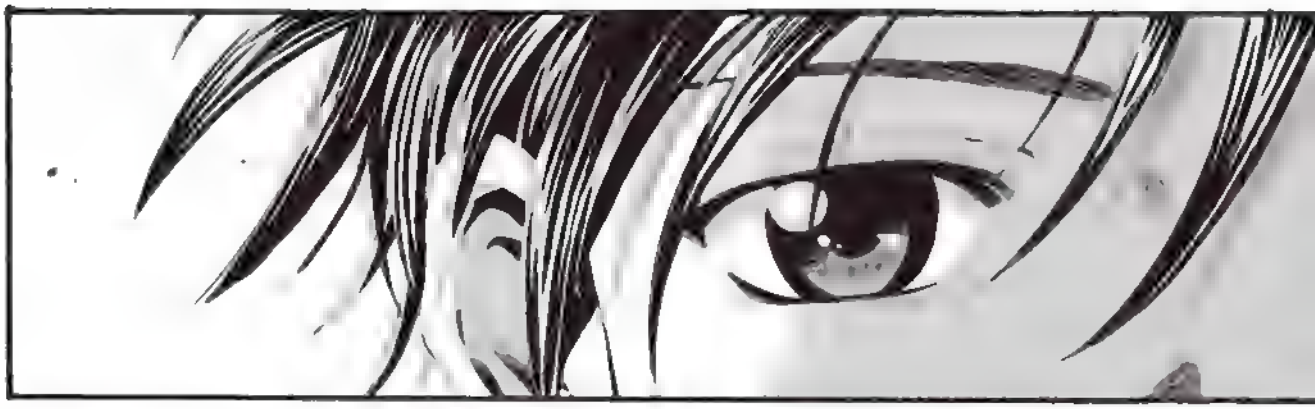
I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T BELIEVE IN SHINTO GODS AND STUFF LIKE THAT.

I THOUGHT WAS GOING TO DIE FOR A SEC THERE.
I GOT HIT BY SO MANY OFFERING COINS.
HAHH
HAHH
YOU'RE SUCH A WUSS. THAT WAS NOTHING.

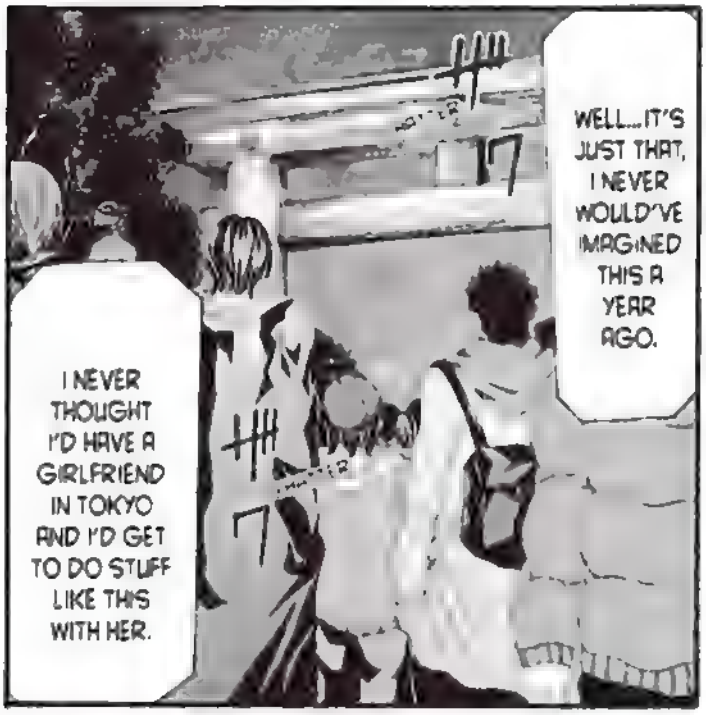

WELL, I DON'T. BUT I KIND OF LIKE THIS WHOLE ATMOSPHERE.
BESIDES, I WANTED TO MAKE A SPECIAL NEW YEAR'S PRAYER THIS YEAR.

IT'S A SECRET!
STEP
OH YEAH?
IS IT ABOUT THE TRACK TEAM?

HEY, LET'S GO CHECK OUT THE STREET VENDORS. THERE'RE TONS OF 'EM.
HEY, WAIT UP! WHERE'D YOU GET ALL THIS ENERGY?



WHAT..?
WHAT'S WRONG?


I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HAVE A GIRLFRIEND IN TOKYO AND I'D GET TO DO STUFF LIKE THIS WITH HER.
WELL... IT'S JUST THAT, I NEVER WOULD'VE IMAGINED THIS A YEAR AGO.

HUH? OH... SORRY, IT'S NOTHING.
ARE YOU SURE...? YOU WERE TOTALLY SPACING OUT..

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU'RE SO WEIRD

SO I WAS JUST WONDER-ING... WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT YEAR?
LIKE, WILL WE STILL BE TOGETHER OR...
YAMATO-KUN.
STEP
HEY...
CAN I ASK YOU SOME-THING?
WHAT IS IT...?
WHEN DID YOU...
...FIRST FALL FOR ME, YAMATO-KUN?
WHAT...?
W-WHEN...? I GUESS WHEN I FIRST SAW YOU...
I FELT LIKE SOME-THING INSIDE ME JUST CLICKED.
REALLY...?
YAKITORI

BECAUSE YOU WERE ACTING LIKE A TOTAL PERVERT IN THE BATHS AND THEN YOU BROKE THAT WALL IN MY ROOM.
YOU WERE TOTALLY CLUELESS AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO GO SHOPPING?

I REALLY HATED YOU...
...WHEN WE FIRST MET.
WHAT!? ARE YOU SERIOUS!?

...YEAH
OH...

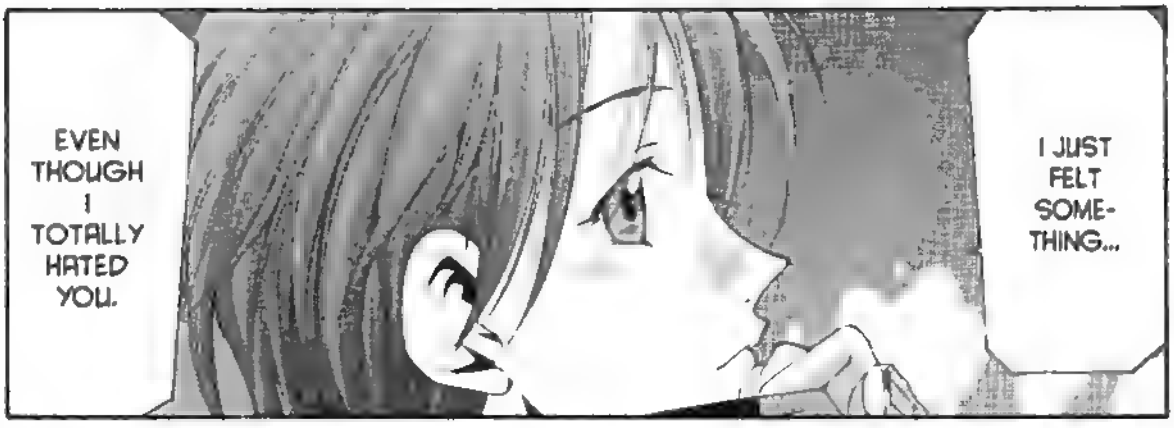
HOCO
HUH...
I-IS IT... WHEN I STOOD UP FOR YOU IN FRONT OF ARIMA?

SO... WHEN DID YOUR FEELINGS CHANGE?
OH...I KNOW! WHEN I FIRST KISSED YOU IN THE PARK, RIGHT...?
NO, BEFORE THAT!

.....
FWUMP
"!...

HUH...?
I KNOW IT'S LATE, THIS IS YOUR CHRISTMAS PRESENT.
I WAS GOING TO MAKE YOU A SWEATER, BUT I DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME.
OH...AH... WELL...DO YOU WANT TO USE MY SCARF NOW!? YOU'LL FREEZE WITHOUT ONE!!
OKAY, THANKS.
HERE:
FLAPPA

WHAT?
I GUESS IT'S THE SAME FOR ME THOUGH... IT STARTED THE FIRST TIME I SAW YOU.


EVEN THOUGH I TOTALLY HATED YOU.
I JUST FELT SOME-THING...

かみどり
AND, OF COURSE I WORRY ABOUT IT, TOO, YOU KNOW.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT YEAR EITHER.

R-REALLY?
I-I HAD NO IDEA...

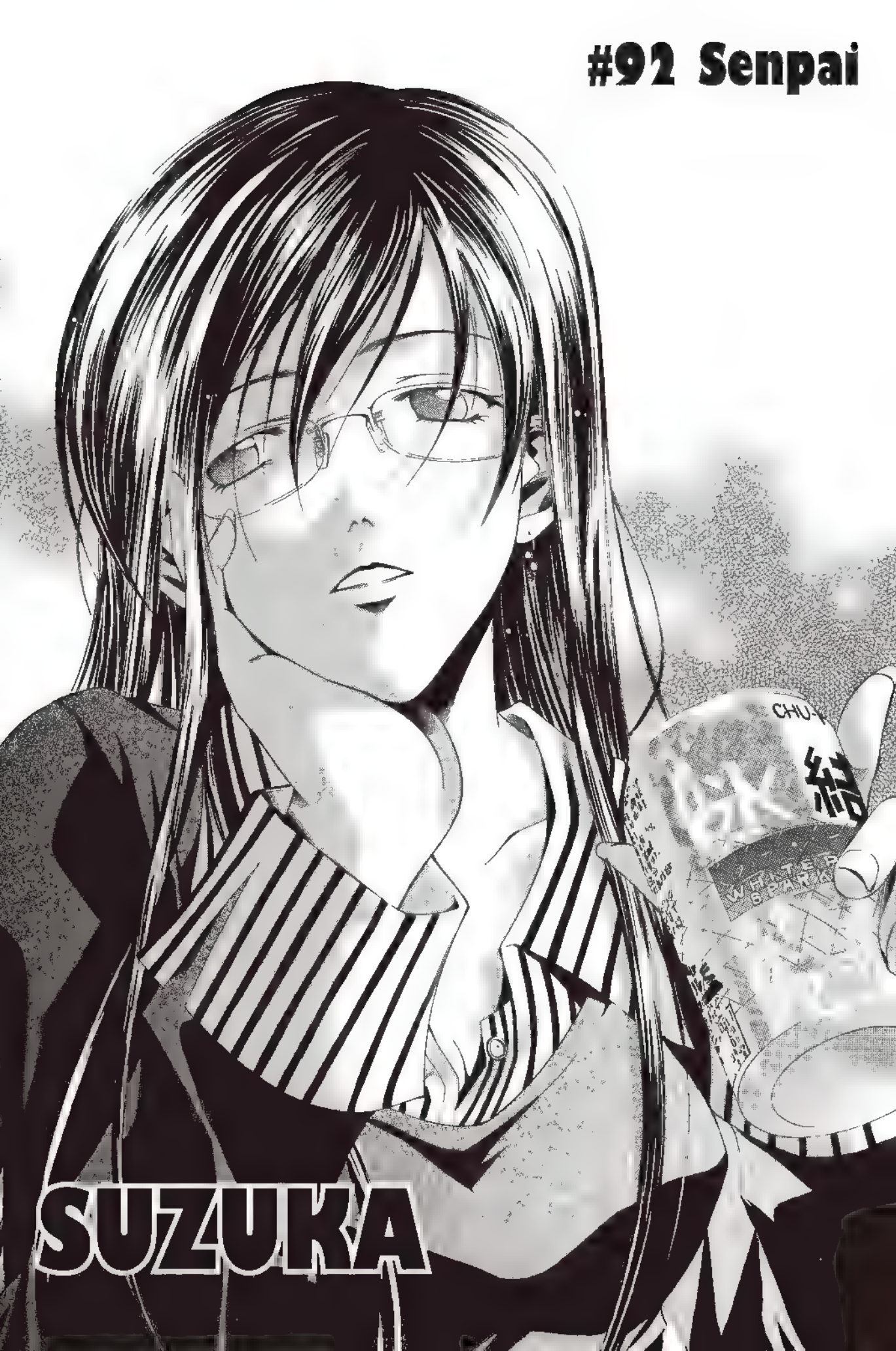
SQUEEZE

THAT'S WHY I CAME HERE.
SO I COULD PRAY THAT WE'LL STILL BE TOGETHER NEXT YEAR.
OH...
ASAHINA...
WELL, THAT'S ONE PRAYER THAT'S SURE TO BE ANSWERED.
WHAT...?
HOW DO YOU KNOW?

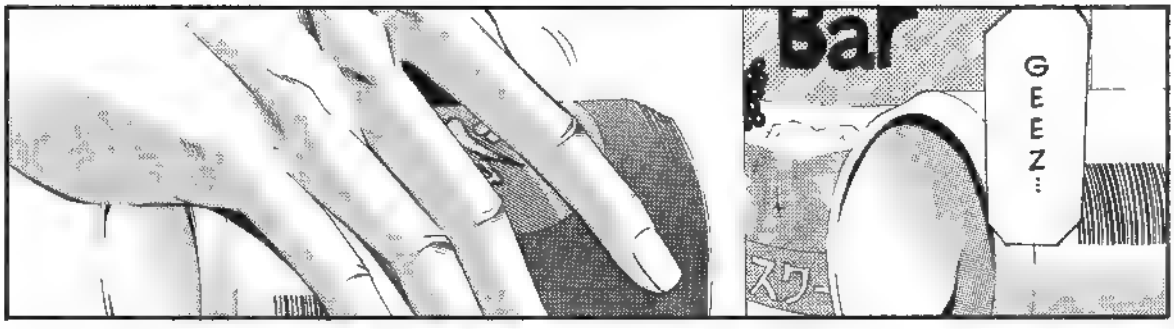
...I PRAYED FOR THE SAME THING...
BECAUSE...
.....
OH...

PLUNK
HAAA
.....
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YULKA-SAN...?
PLOP
DON'T KNOW. SHE'S BEEN LIKE THAT EVER SINCE SHE CAME BACK FROM VISITING HER HOMETOWN...
SIGH...
SHE HASN'T CHANGED HER HAIR COLOR BACK YET.
IT JUST DOESN'T LOOK RIGHT.
KNOW...
SIGH

#92 Senpai



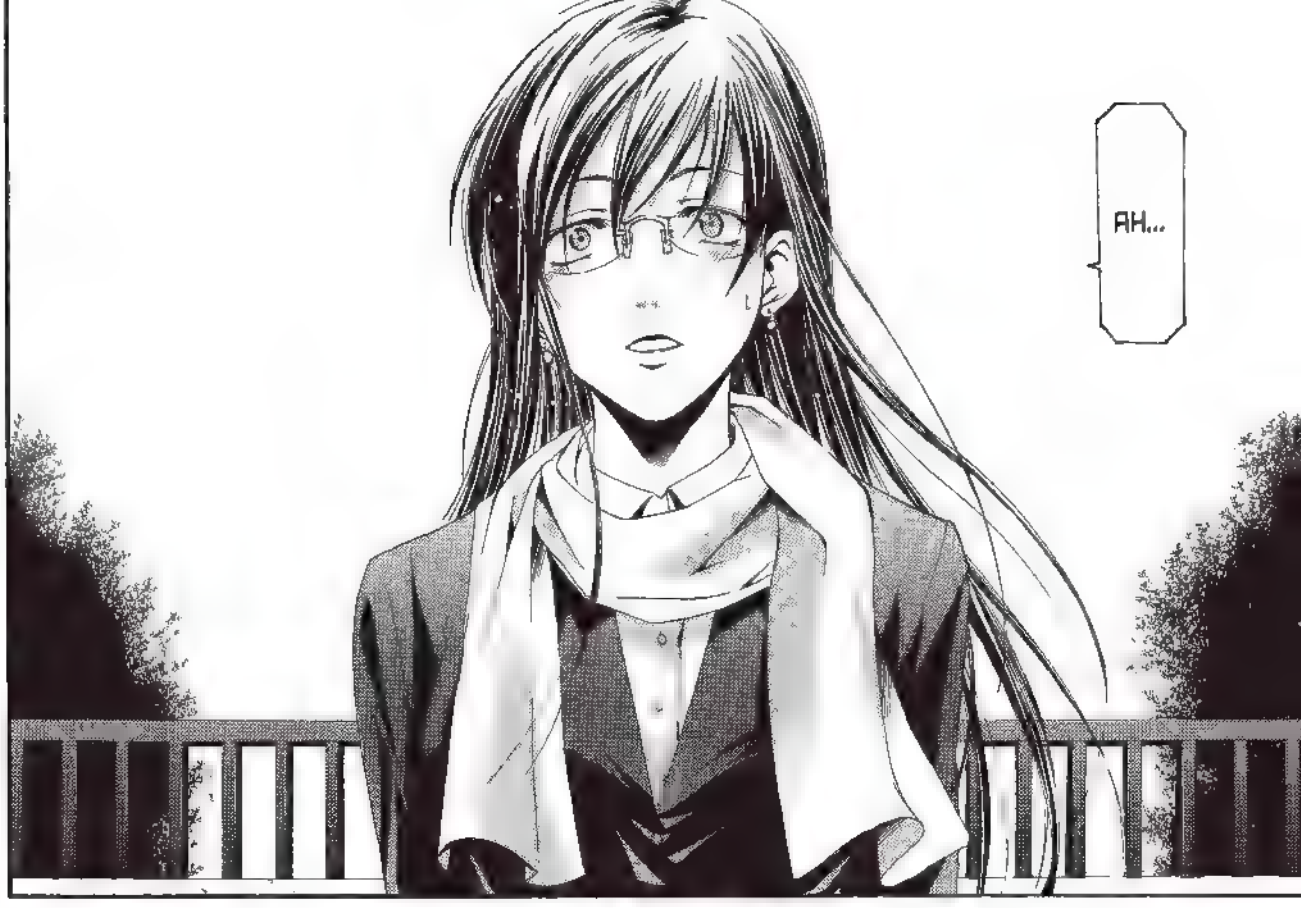
ASAHINA BATH

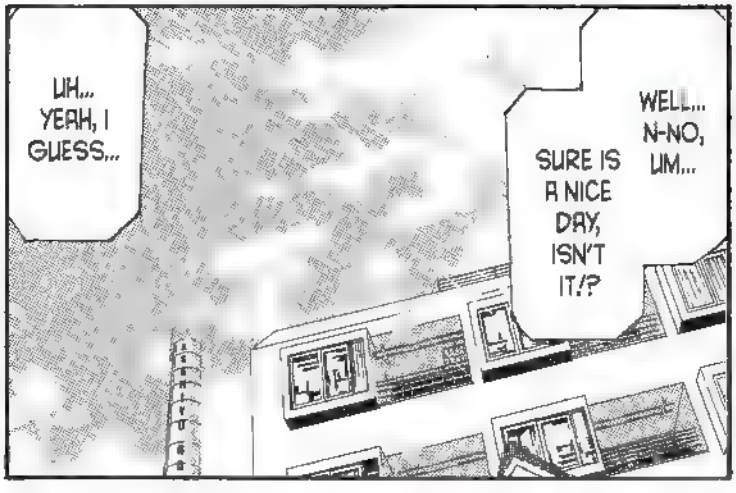

Bar
GEEZ...

I SHOULD ASK ASAHINA IF SHE WANTS TO GO SOME-WHERE.
SCHOOL STARTS TOMORROW AND HERE I AM WASTING MY LAST DAY OF FREEDOM CLEANING UP AFTER HER. THIS SUCKS.

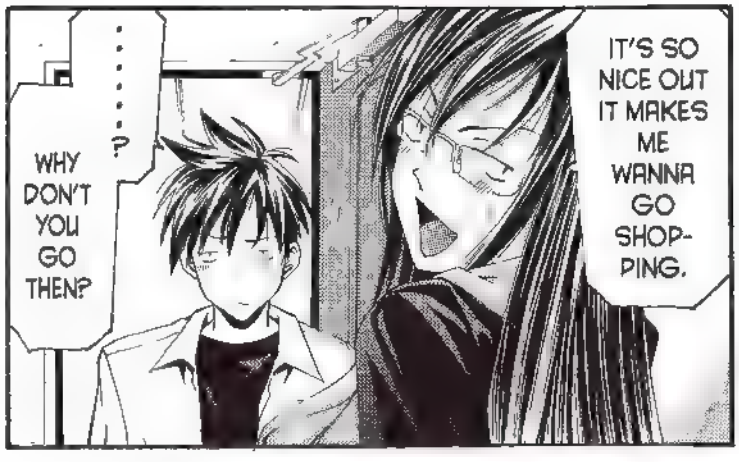
EVEN WHEN SHE'S ACTING WEIRD, SHE STILL POUNDS DOWN THE BOOZE...
カリ
CLANK
LOOK AT ALL THIS TRASH SHE LEFT BEHIND...! I CAN'T BE-LIEVE SHE'S ACTUALLY IN COLLEGE.

カチャ
CLICK
WHAT...?


AH...


UH... YEAH, I GUESS...
SURE IS A NICE DAY, ISN'T IT!?
WELL... N-NO, UM...

...YUUKA-SAN.
WHAT? DID YOU FORGET SOME-THING?


IT'S SO NICE OUT IT MAKES ME WANNA GO SHOP-PING.
.....?
WHY DON'T YOU GO THEN?

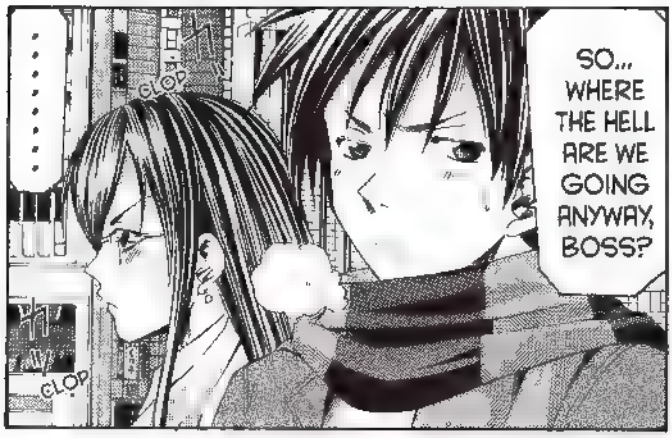
GRRIP
SORRY. I'M KINDA BUSY.
AH...!
I'M TOTALLY FREE TODAY. I'LL TELL YOU WHAT. HOW 'BOUT I LET YOU CARRY MY BAGS FOR ME.
.....
YEAH, REAL TEMPTING, BUT... I'VE GOT PLANS, SO...
YOU MEAN YOU'RE GONNA LET A FRAGILE LITTLE LADY LIKE ME CARRY A BUNCH OF HEAVY BAGS ALL BY HERSELF!?
FRAGILE LITTLE LADY? YEAH, RIGHT!
HEY, YAMATO-KUN. WHAT ARE YOU YAKKING ABOUT?
CLICK
AH! SUZUKA-CHAN.
HEY, CAN I BORROW YAMATO-KUN JUST FOR TODAY!? HE CAN BE MY PORTER!!
NO WAY. YOU DON'T WANT ME GOING OUT SHOPPING WITH ANOTHER GIRL, DO YA?

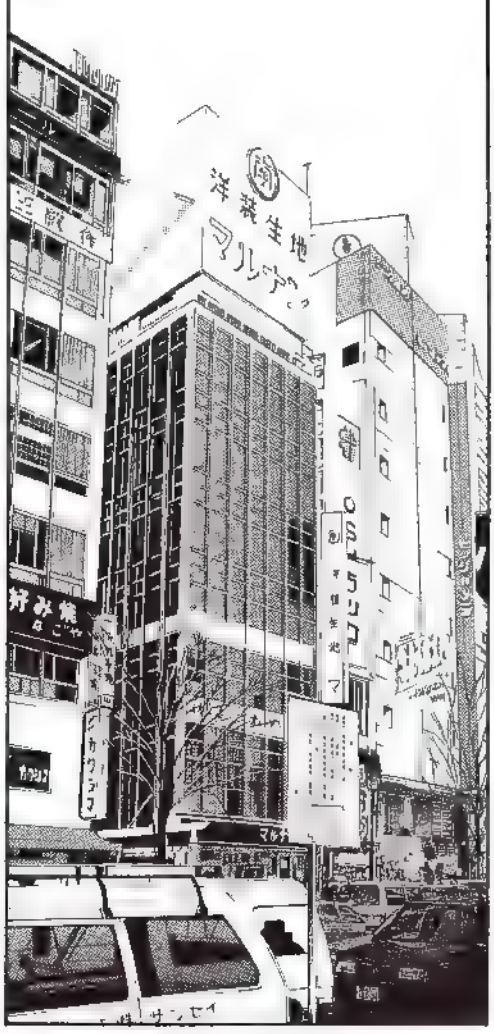
I HAVE SOME STUFF TO DO TODAY ANYWAY.
GO AHEAD.

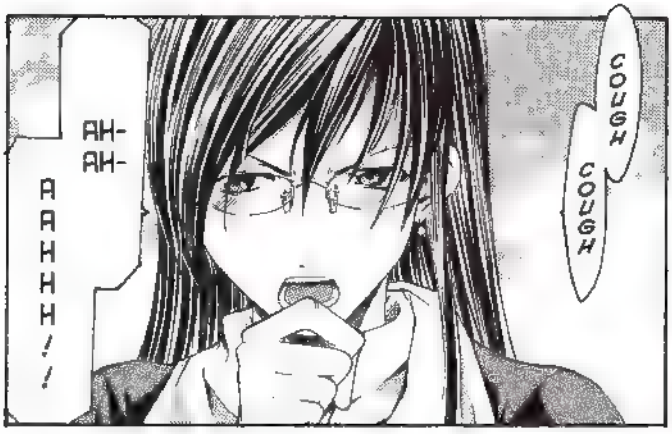
THERE. YOU'VE GOT PERMISSION, NOW GO GET READY.
AH... ASAH..
SLAM
WELL, HAVE FUN, YAMATO-KUN.

HUH? WHAT THE HELL—!
THANKS! THIS'LL REALLY HELP ME OUT.
NO PROBLEM. I KNOW HE'S IN GOOD HANDS IF YOU'RE WITH HIM, YUUKA-SAN.

COME ON. MOVE IT!! TIME IS MONEY.
WHA—? SHE ALWAYS GETS PISSED WHEN I HANG OUT WITH OTHER GIRLS. WHY'S SHE COOL WITH IT NOW?


SO... WHERE THE HELL ARE WE GOING ANYWAY, BOSS?
CLOP
CLOP



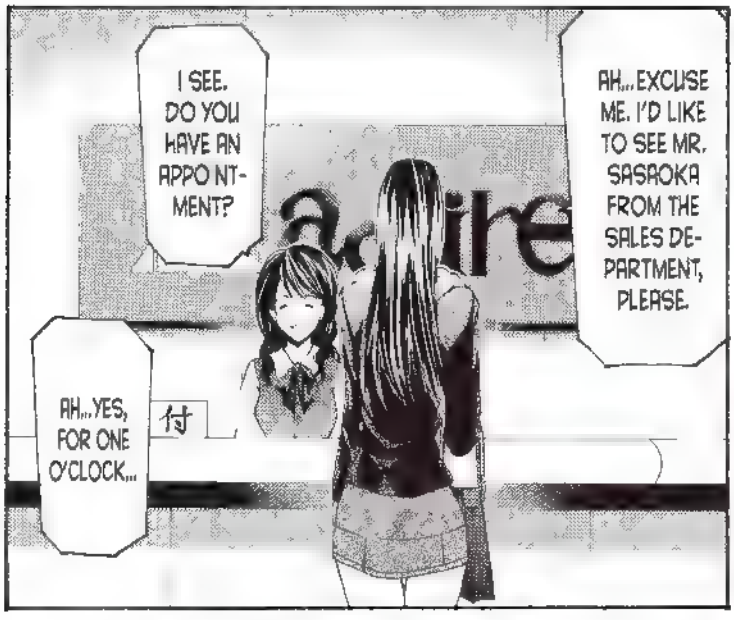

COUGH COUGH
AH-AH-AAHHH!!

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?
.....?

HUH? GO WHERE?
LET'S GO, YAMATO-KUN...!

.....
GLARE
OKAY!

IT'S NOT EVEN A SHOP.
THAT'S JUST A SPORTS-WEAR COMPANY'S OFFICE BUILDING...


I SEE. DO YOU HAVE AN APPO NT-MENT?
AH...EXCUSE ME. I'D LIKE TO SEE MR. SASAOKA FROM THE SALES DE-PARTMENT, PLEASE.
AH...YES, FOR ONE O'CLOCK...

SCHWIP
AH...! HEY, YUUKA-SAN!!
ARE YOU SURE WE'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE!?

AN AP-POINT-MENT...?
WHAT THE HELL IS SHE DOING HERE...? WAIT... WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

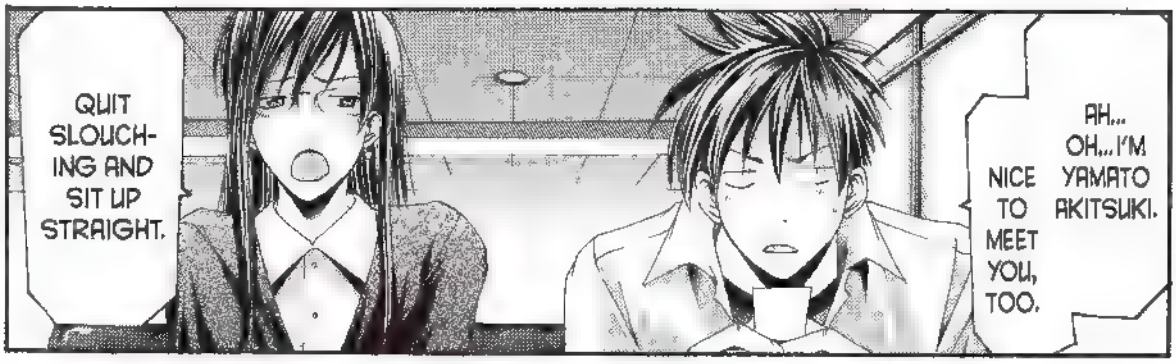
UHH... WHAT'S GOING ON, YUUKA-SAN...?
CLOP
CLOP
LISTEN UP, YAMATO-KUN...
NO MATTER WHAT ANYBODY ASKS YOU WHILE WE'RE IN HERE, JUST ANSWER YES.
IF YOU SAY ANYTHING STUPID I SWEAR I'LL KILL YOU. I'M NOT JOKING EITHER, GOT IT?.
GRRRRROOWWWLLLL
...YES.
WHA—!? WHAT'S SHE TALKING ABOUT.
CLOPPA
CLOPPA
!?
SORRY.

SE...
...SEN-PAI...!

THANKS FOR COMING OUT TO SEE US TODAY. I KNOW YOU'RE REALLY BUSY. I REALLY AP-PRECIATE YOU MAKING TIME FOR HIM!!
YOINK
YOINK
WHAT!?
HUH!?
IT'S NO PROBLEM! AND YOU CAN STOP CALLING ME "SENPAI." IT SOUNDS WEIRD.

SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING!
SHALL WE SIT DOWN SOMEWHERE AND HAVE A CUP OF TEA!?

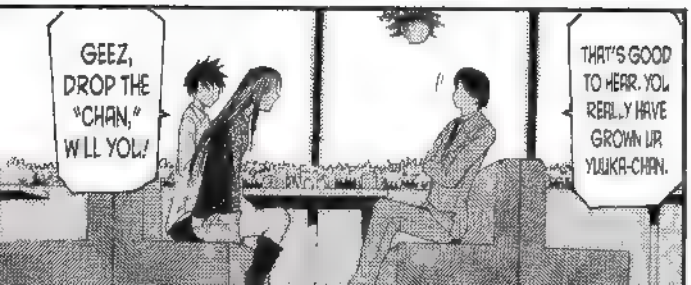
I'M SASAOKA FROM THE ADIREX SALES DEPARTMENT.
NICE TO MEET YOU.
RESTAURANT
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE!!?


QUIT SLOUCHING AND SIT UP STRAIGHT.
NICE TO MEET YOU, TOO.
AH... OH... I'M YAMATO AKITSUKI.

WHAT!?
IT LOOKS MUCH BETTER LIKE THAT.

WE WENT TO HIGH SCHOOL TOGETHER. I CAME BACK FROM THE STATES TO SPEND NEW YEAR'S HERE, AND WE RAN INTO EACH OTHER FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS.
I'M GLAD TO SEE YOUR HAIR IS BLACK AGAIN.

W-WELL, OF COURSE. I'M NOT A SILLY LITTLE KID ANYMORE, YA KNOW.
.....!?


GEEZ, DROP THE "CHAN," WILL YOU!
THAT'S GOOD TO HEAR. YOU REALLY HAVE GROWN UP YUUKA-CHAN.

AH...!!
BLINK
I GET IT!! THIS MUST BE THE GUY YOU'RE ALWAYS TALKING ABOUT. THE ONE WHO KEPT TURN-ING YOU DOWN, RIGHT?
GWAHH!!
SLAM
SLAM
GEEZ. WHAT ARE YOU DOING? CONTROL YOUR-SELF!
STOMP
I TOLD YOU TO KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT, REMEM-BER?
SHUDDER
SHUDDER
SISORRY...
HA, HA, HA, YOU'RE FUNNY.
HEH...

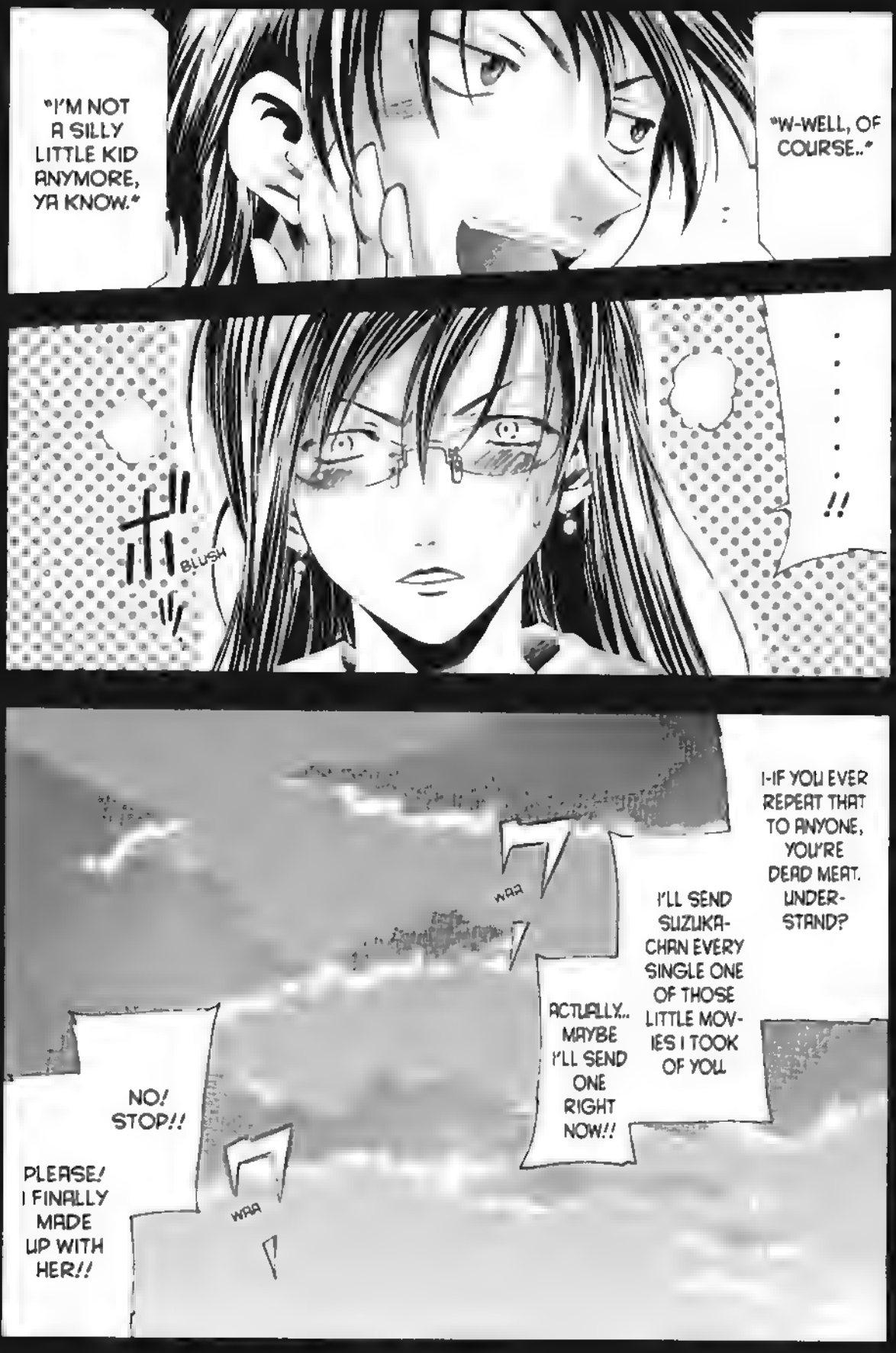
HOW CAN YOU NOT REMEMBER? YOU'RE SO RUDE.
YOU BEGGED ME TO BRING YOU HERE.
SHUT
WHAT?
SO...WHY EXACTLY AM I HERE TODAY...?
YOU WOULDN'T SHUT UP ABOUT GETTING A PAIR OF CUSTOM-SPIKED SHOES...
SO THAT YOU COULD RUN EVEN FASTER!!
WHAT...?
I SAID THAT...?
OH YEAH...OF COURSE...I DID SAY THAT!! I FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT!!
NUDGE NUDGE NUDGE
.....
WELL...I GUESS I COULD MAKE A PAIR FOR YOU...AS A FAVOR TO YUUKA-CHAN OF COURSE...
YOU RUN THE 100-METER RIGHT? HAVE YOU BEEN IN ANY COMPETITIONS YET?

I-I SEE...
I GOT INTO THE SEMI-FINALS AT THE TOKYO DISTRICT PRELIMI-NARIES.
AH... YES. I DIDN'T MAKE IT INTO THE I.H., BUT...
CLINK
I MEAN...
WELL... I'M NOT SURE HOW TO PUT THIS...
AH... YEAH.
I KNOW...
BUT CUSTOM-MADE SHOES REALLY WON'T IMPROVE YOUR RECORD BY TWO SECONDS OR EVEN A SECOND. YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT?
OF COURSE, FIRST-CLASS ATHLETES DO USE THEIR OWN CUSTOM SHOES...

WHAT HE'S TRYING TO SAY IS IT'S A LITTLE EARLY FOR A THIRD-RATE ATHLETE LIKE YOU TO START TALKING ABOUT GETTING CUSTOM-MADE SHOES.
NOW DO YOU GET IT!? IF YOU WANNA RUN FASTER, WHY DON'T YOU JUST TRY PRACTICING HARDER!
YOU ALWAYS LOOK FOR THE EASY WAY OUT!!
AH...ALL RIGHT...
I'M SORRY...
WHY THE HELL IS SHE YELLING AT ME?
TELL YOU WHAT, IF YOU MAKE IT INTO THE INTER-HIGH COMPETITION, I'LL MAKE YOU A PAIR!
HOW ABOUT THAT, YAMATO-KUN?
I'M SO SORRY, SENPAI.
I TRIED TO TELL HIM, BUT HE JUST WOULDN'T LISTEN!
BOW
BOW
MAKING CUSTOM-MADE SHOES FOR HIM WOULD JUST BE A BIG WASTE.
WELL, . WOULDN'T SAY THAT, YUUKA-CHAN.
UH... ALL RIGHT.
I GET IT...I'M JUST AN EXCUSE FOR HER TO COME SEE THIS GUY.

IT'S KINDA WEIRD TO SEE HER LIKE THIS.
ANY-WAY...
YUUKA-SAN ACTUALLY HAS A REALLY CUTE SMILE...
...WHEN SHE'S WITH THE GUY SHE LIKES.
CLOPPA
CLOPPA

H-HEY, YUUKA-SAN...
YES?
.....
SIGH... TO HIM, I MUST LOOK LIKE I'M STILL JUST A LITTLE KID.
I MEAN, HE STILL CALLS ME 'YUUKA-CHAN'...
UH... I DON'T KNOW...
DOES SASAOKA-SAN HAVE A... GIRL-FRIEND?
.....
OH...
I MEAN...
I'D BE WAY TOO SCARED TO EVEN ASK.
WELL ANYWAY, AT LEAST IT WAS ENTER-TAIN-ING TO WATCH.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN...?


"I'M NOT A SILLY LITTLE KID ANYMORE, YA KNOW."
"W-WELL, OF COURSE.."
BLUSH
. . . . . !!
I-IF YOU EVER REPEAT THAT TO ANYONE, YOU'RE DEAD MEAT. UNDER-STAND?
I'LL SEND SUZUKA-CHAN EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THOSE LITTLE MOV-IES I TOOK OF YOU
WAA
ACTUALLY.. MAYBE I'LL SEND ONE RIGHT NOW!!
NO! STOP!!
PLEASE! I FINALLY MADE UP WITH HER!!
WAA

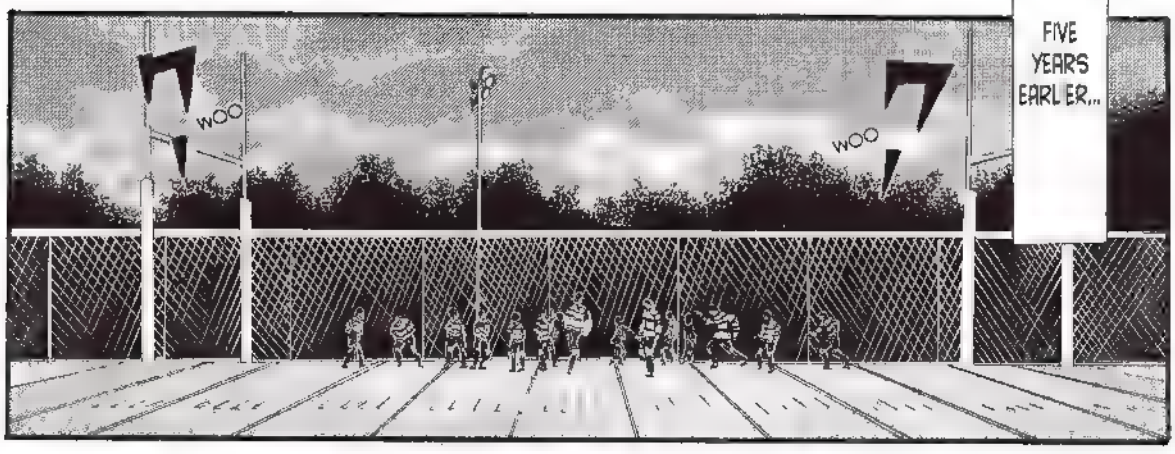
I'M SICK OF THIS CRAP!!
IZAKAYA "KENBISHI"
WHAT ABOUT ME ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR HIM ANYWAY?
!!
POKE
HOW ABOUT WORRYING ABOUT ME FOR A CHANGE?
I'M PRETTY POPULAR AMONG THE COLLEGE BOYS, YOU KNOW!?
PEOPLE SAY I LOOK REALLY MATURE, TOO!!
SO WHY DOES HE STILL TREAT ME LIKE A LITTLE KID!?
THUNK
UH-HUH, UH-HUH. HEY, WHY DON'T WE HEAD HOME...
ASAHINA IS PROBABLY STARTING TO WORRY...
.....
YOU'RE LUCKY YOU HAVE A GIRLFRIEND. YOU COULD NEVER UNDERSTAND.
POKE
POKE
HEY, WAITER. WHERE'S MY SAKE?
JUST A MOMENT, MA'AM.
CAN WE PLEASE JUST GO HOME.

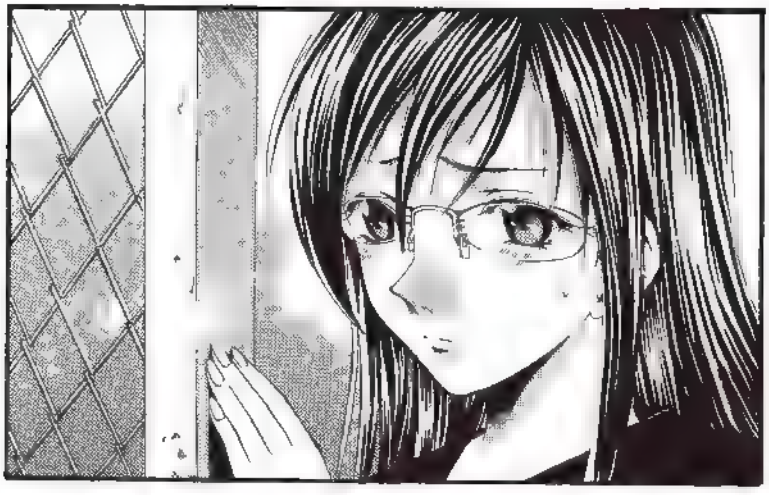
SUZUKA

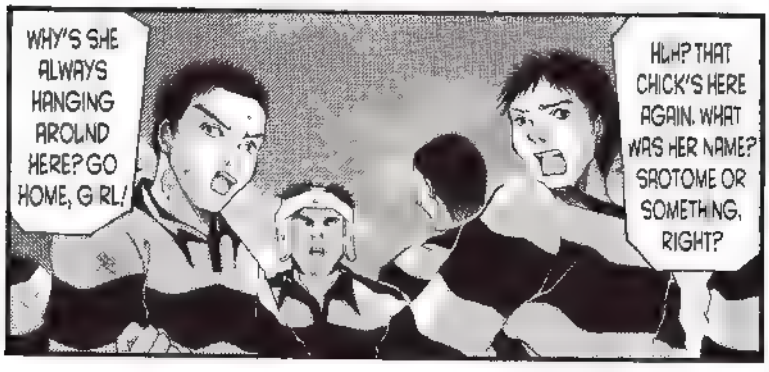
#93 The Kid

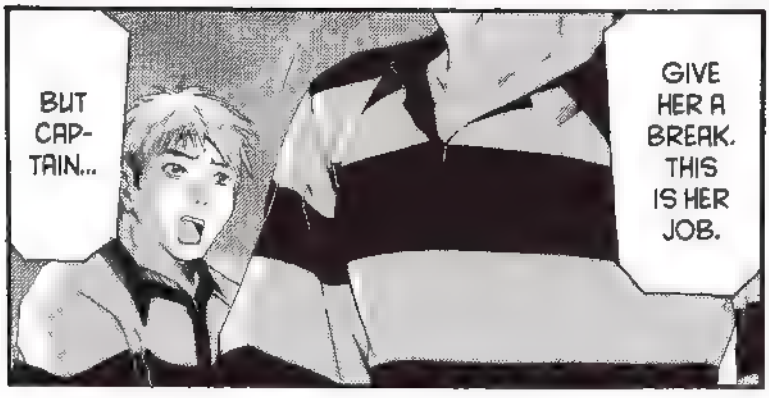
料理
カラオケ
NO WAY! MY FEET HURT!!
CAN'T YOU WALK BY YOURSELF?
COME ON, HURRY IT UP!!
IT'LL BE MORNING SOON!!
SH-SHUT UP!
SQUISH
JUST KEEP WALKING! DO YOU FEEL MY BOOBS PRESSING AGAINST YOU?
GEEZ. AND YOU CALL ME A "KID"?
A HA HA. AWW, AM I EMBARRASSING YOU? YOU'RE SUCH A KID.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU HAVEN'T SQUEEZED SUZUKA'S BOOBS ALREADY.
I HAVEN'T!!
WHAT'S WRONG? ARE YOU FEELING SICK?
.....

...KID, HUH...?
SO, I'M THE...
WELL...
.....
...TWO YEARS AHEAD OF ME IN SCHOOL
WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER SINCE WE WERE LITTLE. HE WAS...
WHAT?
HOW DO YOU AND SASAOKA-SAN...
...KNOW EACH OTHER?

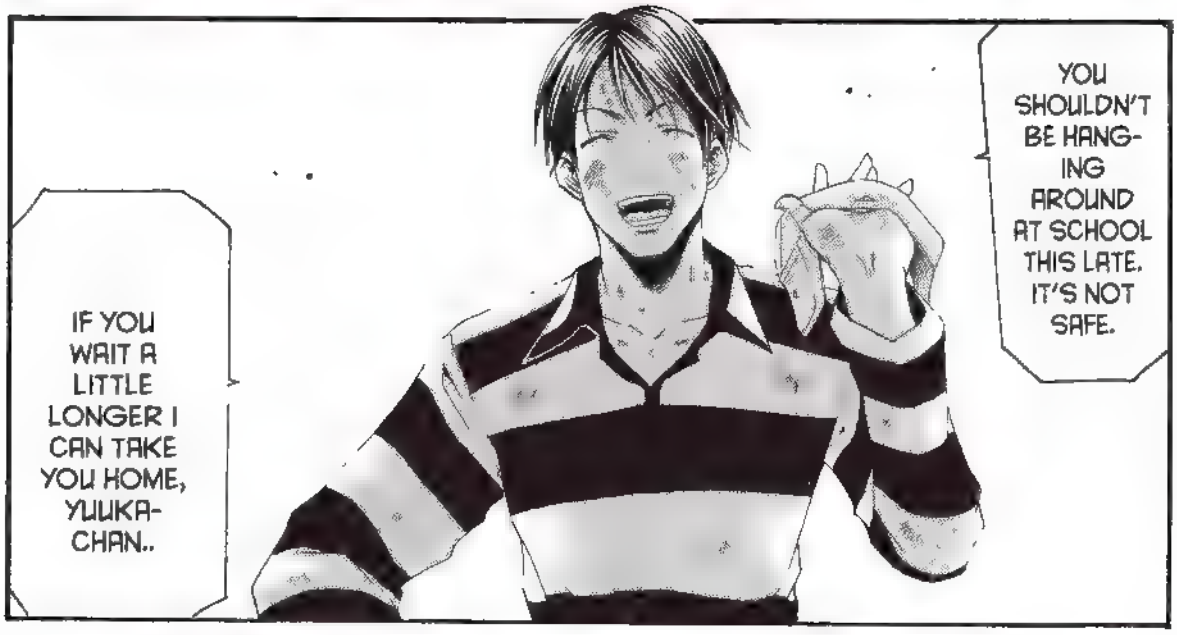

WOO
WOO
FIVE YEARS EARLIER...

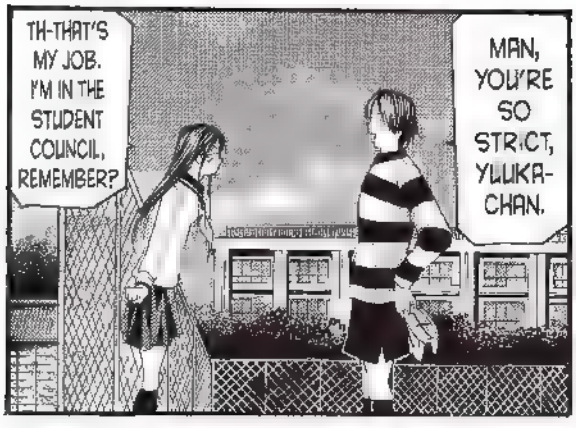


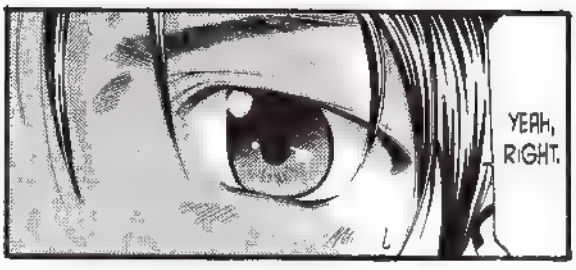

WHY'S SHE ALWAYS HANGING AROUND HERE? GO HOME, GIRL!
HUH? THAT CHICK'S HERE AGAIN. WHAT WAS HER NAME? SROTOME OR SOMETHING, RIGHT?


BUT CAP-TAIN...
GIVE HER A BREAK. THIS IS HER JOB.

STEP


YOU SHOULDN'T BE HANG-ING AROUND AT SCHOOL THIS LATE. IT'S NOT SAFE.
IF YOU WAIT A LITTLE LONGER I CAN TAKE YOU HOME, YUUKA-CHAN..


TH-THAT'S MY JOB. I'M IN THE STUDENT COUNCIL, REMEMBER?
MAN, YOU'RE SO STRICT, YUUKA-CHAN.

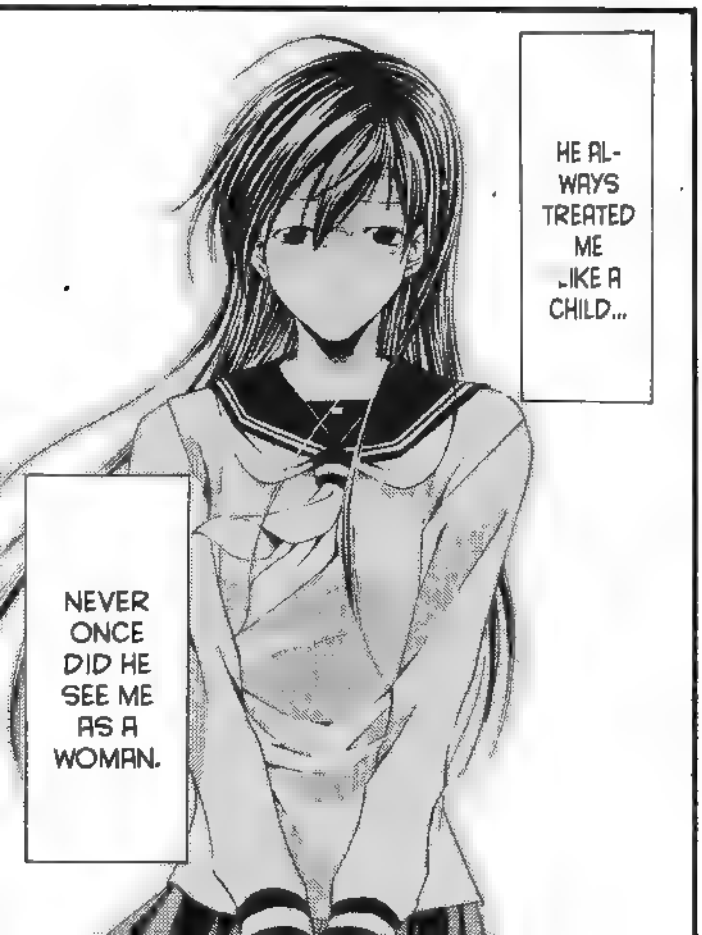

YEAH, RIGHT.

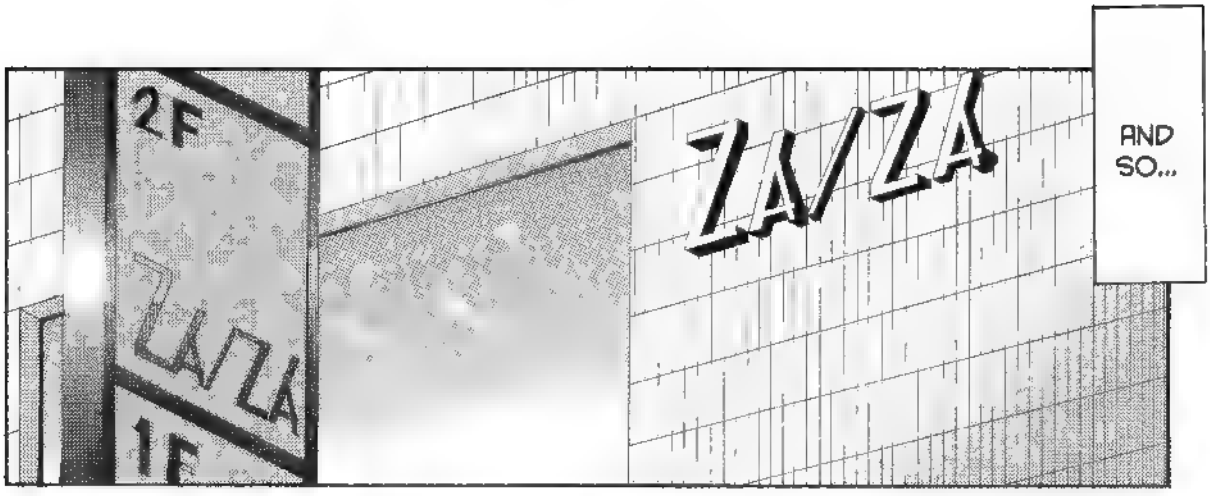
S-STOP CALL-ING ME THAT...
WOULD YOU GUYS JUST HURRY UP AND GO HOME? THE SCHOOL'S SUPPOSED TO BE CLOSED.

YOU ALWAYS SAY THAT, BUT I BET THE TRUTH IS, YOU JUST LIKE ONE OF THE GUYS ON THE RUGBY TEAM. RIGHT?
YOU CAN'T FOOL ME!

T-THAT'S NOT...
...TRUE!!

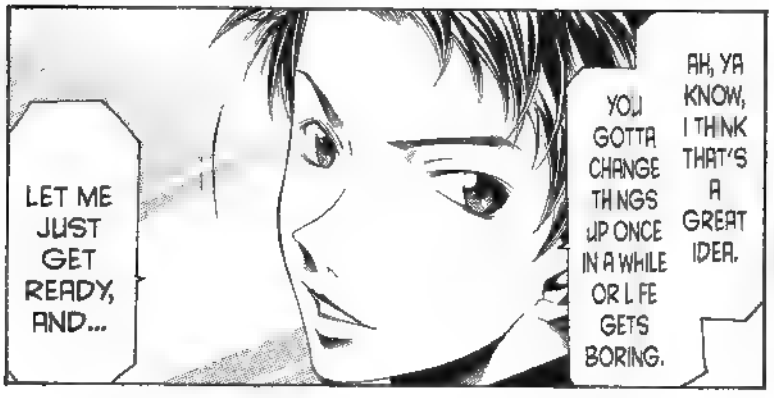
GIVE ME A BREAK. I'VE KNOWN YOU SINCE YOU WERE A KID.
I KNOW EVERY-THING THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT YOU!

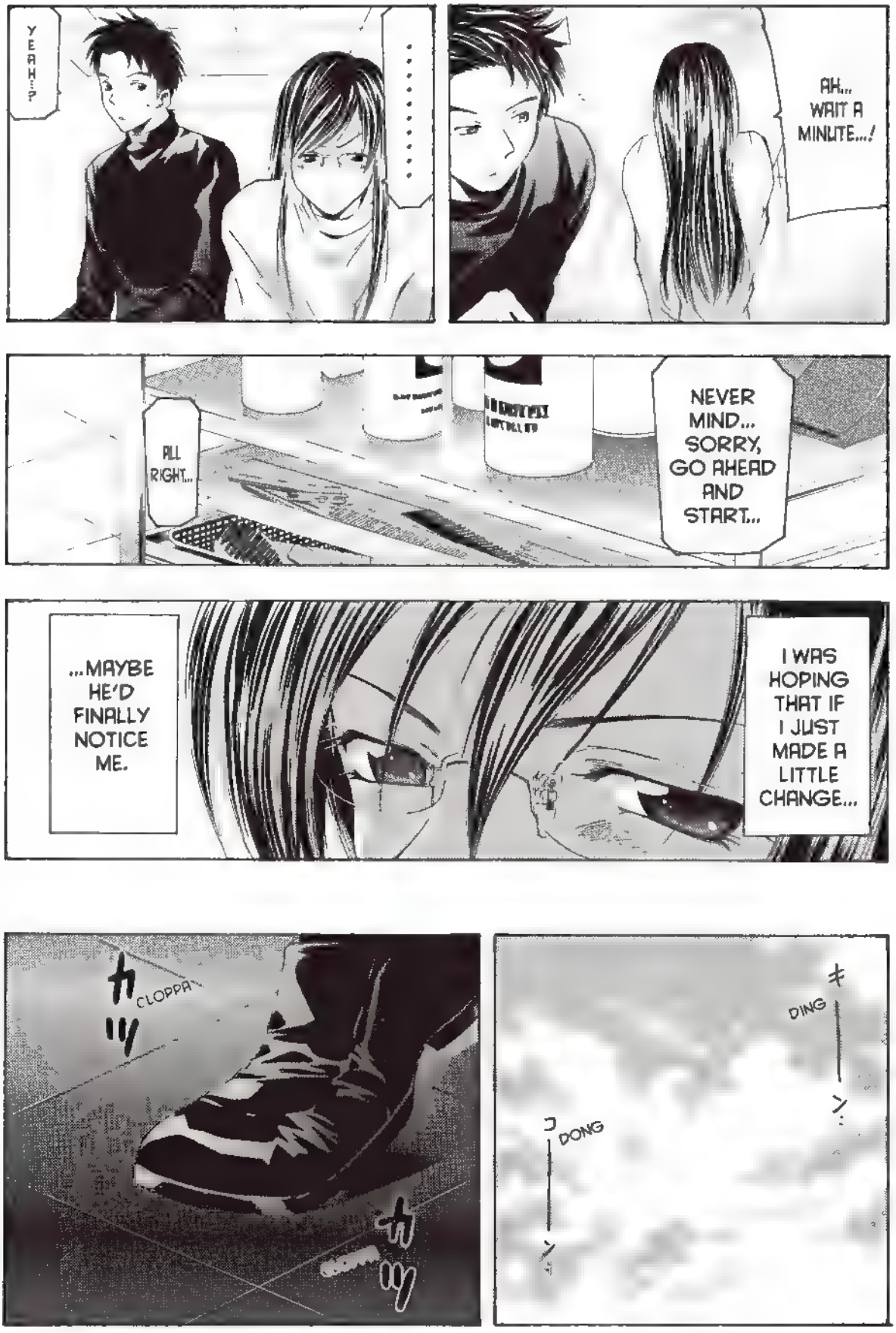

HE AL-WAYS TREATED ME LIKE A CHILD...
NEVER ONCE DID HE SEE ME AS A WOMAN.


2F
ZAZZA
1F
ZAZZA
AND SO...

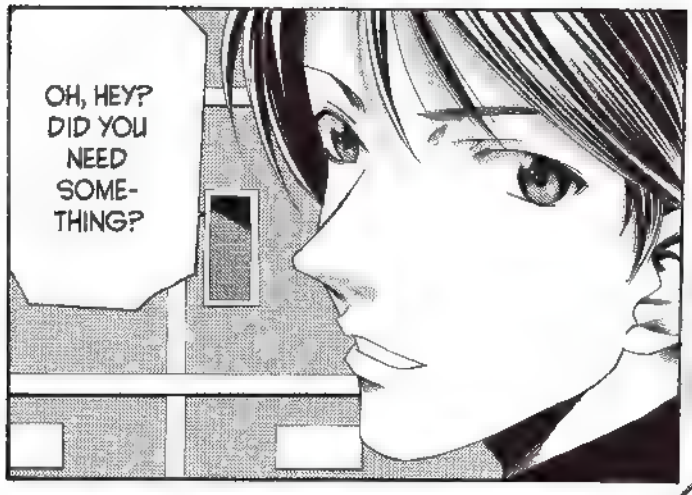
HUH?
I'D LIKE A PERM TODAY, PLEASE...

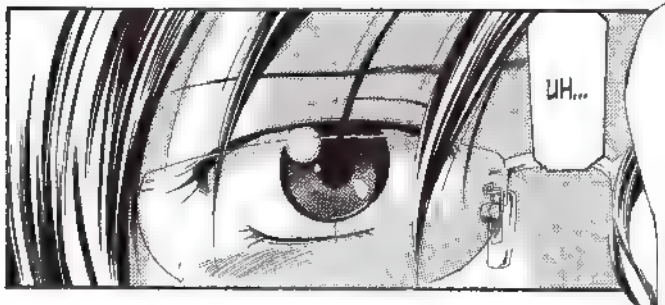
WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR USUAL TRIM?
ACTUALLY...


LET ME JUST GET READY, AND...
YOU GOTTA CHANGE THINGS UP ONCE IN A WHILE OR LIFE GETS BORING.
AH, YA KNOW, I THINK THAT'S A GREAT IDEA.


YEAH?
.....
AH... WAIT A MINUTE...!
ALL RIGHT...
NEVER MIND... SORRY, GO AHEAD AND START...
...MAYBE HE'D FINALLY NOTICE ME.
I WAS HOPING THAT IF I JUST MADE A LITTLE CHANGE...
CLOPPA
DING
DONG

WHAT...?
S-SENPAI!

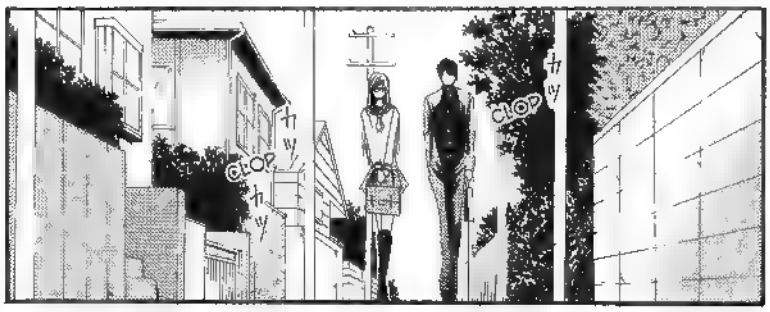

OH, HEY? DID YOU NEED SOME-THING?


UH...

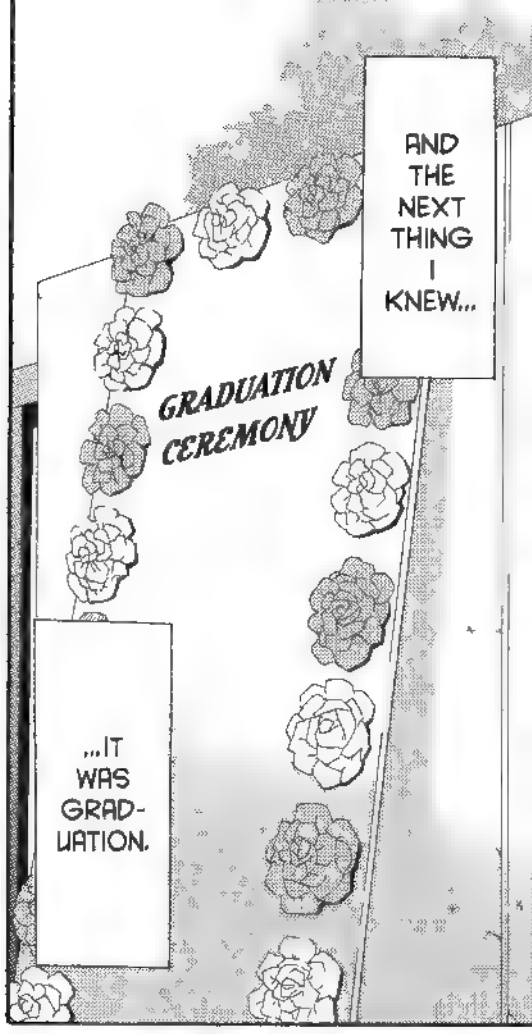
...? WHAT S IT? IS IT SOMETHING THAT'S HARD TO TALK ABOUT?
AH... UH... I JUST...

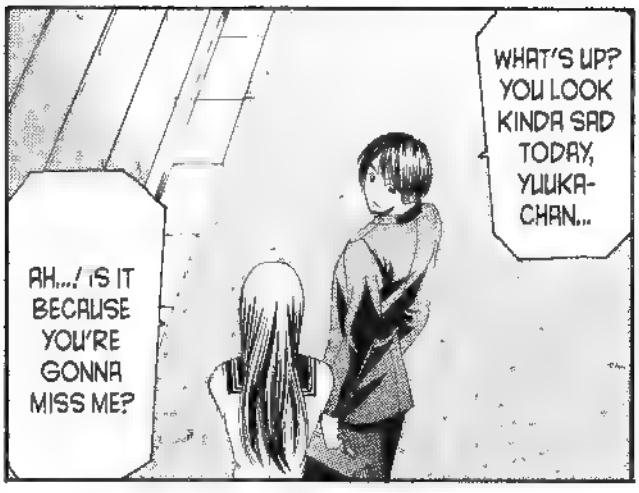
WILL THIS DO IT FOR YOU...?

YOU WANT ME TO TALK TO SOME GUY ON THE RUGBY TEAM FOR YOU, RIGHT?
OH... I GET IT!
SO... WHO IS HE?
I'LL MAKE IT REAL NATURAL.
JUST LEAVE IT TO ME!
WHAT...!? NO!!
.....
H-HEY.
FWOOSH
NEVER MIND!!
DON'T WORRY, IT'S COOL. I THINK IT'S A GREAT IDEA.
I TRIED TO TELL HIM OVER AND OVER AGAIN, BUT IT ALWAYS ENDED LIKE THAT.
WHAT'S WRONG, YUUKA-CHAN!?


CLOP
CLOP

.....
WAS HOPING A SCOUT WOULD SPOT ME AT THE HANAZONO TOURNAMENT, BUT IT D DN'T GO QUITE AS PLANNED.
I'M GOING TO HAVE TO GET A REGULAR JOB AFTER GRADU-ATION.

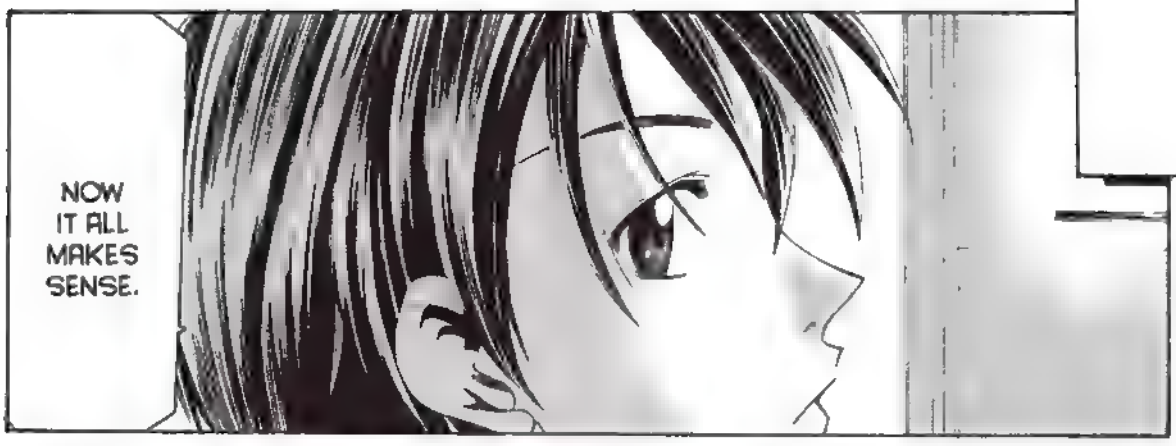

AND THE NEXT THING I KNEW...
GRADUATION CEREMONY
...IT WAS GRAD-UATION.

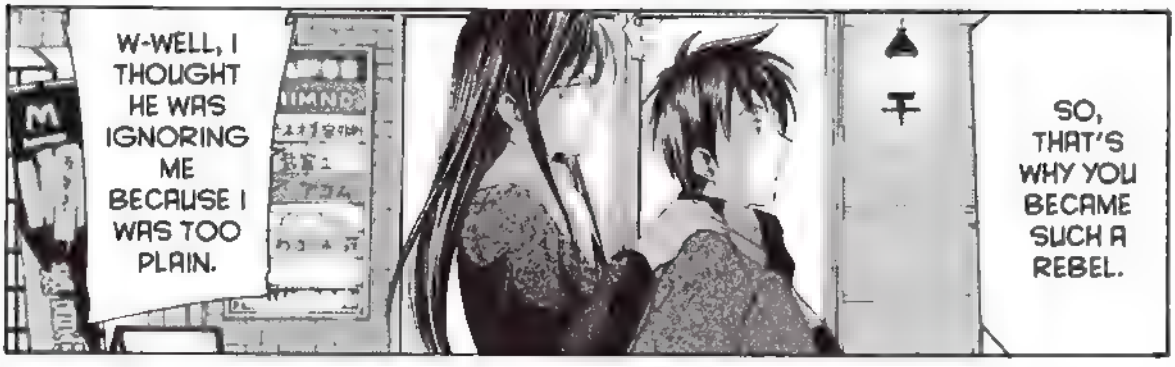

WHAT'S UP? YOU LOOK KINDA SAD TODAY, YUUKA-CHAN...
AH.../ IS IT BECAUSE YOU'RE GONNA MISS ME?

I TOLD YOU TO...
STOP CALLING ME "YUUKA-CHAN"!!
.....?
W-WHAT'S WRONG...?
I...

I'VE ALWAYS LIKED YOU...!
I REALLY LIKE YOU, SENPAI...
WHAT...
I KNOW...
WHAT!?
TSSSWAAA

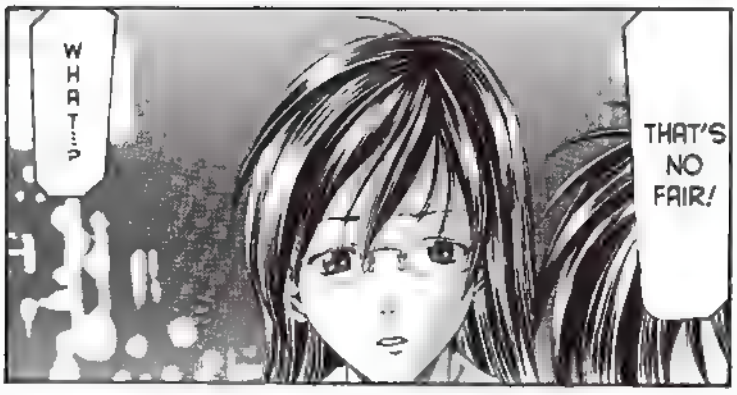
I LIKE YOU, TOO, YUUKA-CHAN.
YOU'RE JUST LIKE A LITTLE SISTER.
SEE YA!
YOU'D BETTER STUDY HARD, NOW THAT YOU'RE THE STUDENT VICE PRESIDENT.
AH...!
HE NEVER EVEN...
SENPAI!!
...TOOK ME SERIOUSLY...
SINCE THAT DAY, I'VE TRIED TO TELL HIM HOW FEEL...
...TIME AND TIME AGAIN...

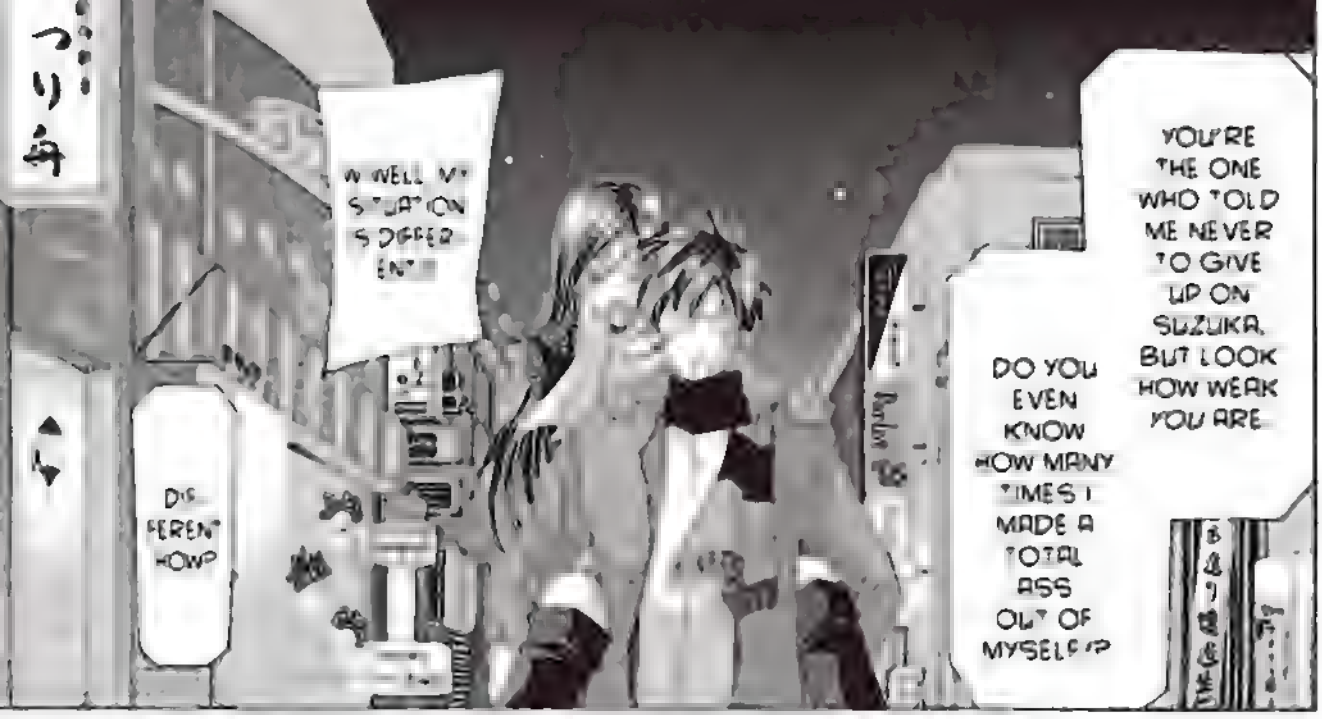

NOW IT ALL MAKES SENSE.

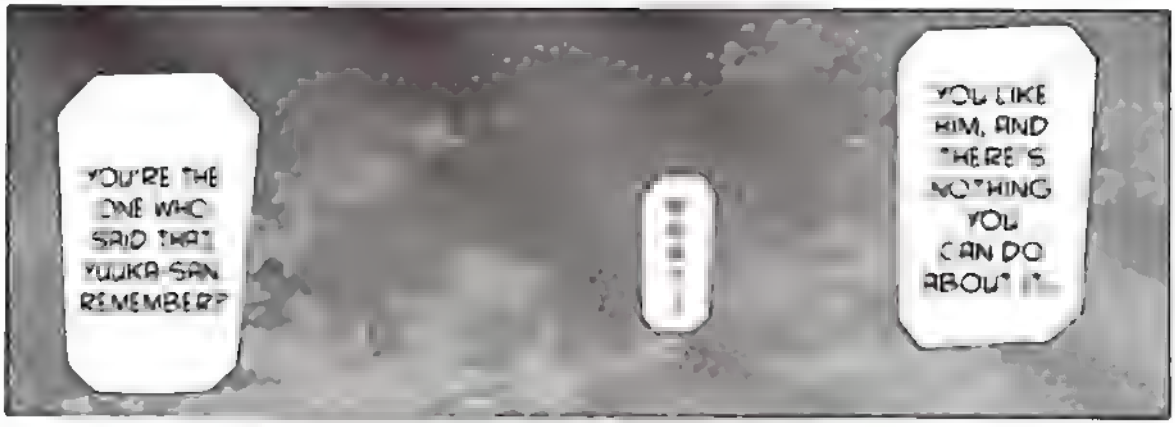

W-WELL, I THOUGHT HE WAS IGNORING ME BECAUSE I WAS TOO PLAIN.
SO, THAT'S WHY YOU BECAME SUCH A REBEL.

DON'T BE STU-PID.
THINGS ARE DIF-FERENT NOW.
IT'S NOT THAT EASY.

WELL, WHY DON'T YOU JUST TRY TELLING HIM HOW YOU FEEL ONE MORE TIME?
カラオケ
NOW THAT YOU'VE GOT ANOTHER CHANCE.


THAT'S NO FAIR!
WHAT!?


DIS FEREN' HOW?
W-WELL MY S'UA'ION S DIFFER ENT!
DO YOU EVEN KNOW HOW MANY TIMES I MADE A 'OTAL ASS OU' OF MYSELF?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO 'OLD ME NEVER 'O GIVE UP ON SUZUKA. BUT LOOK HOW WEAK YOU ARE.


YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID THA' YUUKA-SAN REMEMBER?
YOU LIKE HIM, AND 'HERE'S NO'HING YOU CAN DO ABOU' IT.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE GONNA 'RY TO BECOME MORE MATURE, SO HE'D NOTICE YOU.
WASN'T 'HA' YOUR PLAN?

LET ME DOWN. I CAN WALK.
WHAT BUT YOU SAID-
WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING? THAT'S THE WRONG WAY
GEEZ. HOW COME YOU ONLY REMEMBER WEIRD STUFF ABOUT THAT?
LET'S HIT ANOTHER BAR!
SHUT UP. I DON'T NEED A LITTLE KID LIKE YOU WORRYING ABOUT ME.
WHAT? ARE YOU CRAZY? ASAHINA'LL KILL ME!

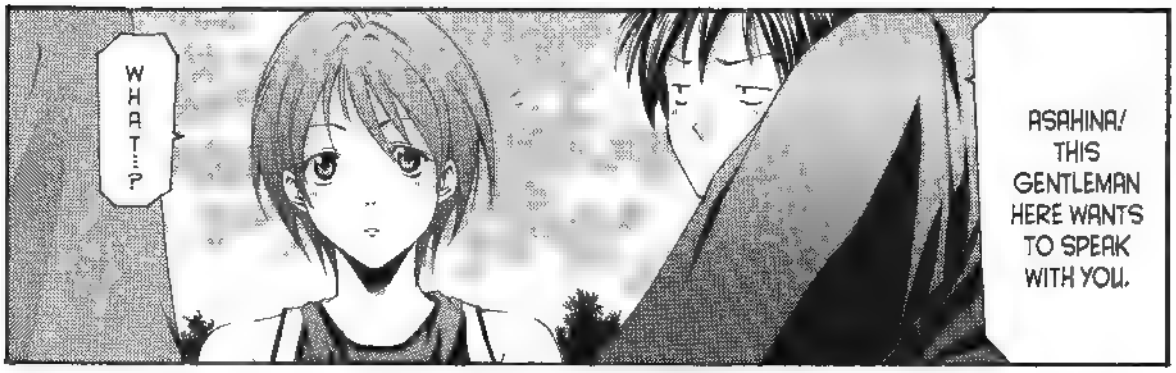
SO THIS IS SUZUKA ASAHINA'S SCHOOL...
AOBA PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOL
AL- RIGHT!
TIME TO GO TO WORK!

SUZUKA
#94 A Custom Order

WHOOSH
WHOOSH
PLUP

FWUMP
PHEW
WOW, LOOKING GOOD, ASAHINA.
YOU'RE SO FULL OF EN-ERGY.

OH, IS IT THAT OBVI-OUS!?
WHY ARE YOU IN SUCH A GOOD MOOD, YAMATO-KUN?
THAT MEANS NO MORE OF HIS STUPID HAZING.
I HEARD THAT THE OLD CAPTAIN WOULDN'T BE COMING BACK THIS SEMESTER.
W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE!!? WOULD YOU QUIT PICKING ON ME, PLEASE?
I DIDN'T COME HERE JUST TO PICK ON YOU, SHITHEAD!
THWUMP
HMMMPH
A-HA...! ARE YOU THAT HAPPY TO BE RID OF ME?


WHAT...?
ASAHINA! THIS GENTLEMAN HERE WANTS TO SPEAK WITH YOU.

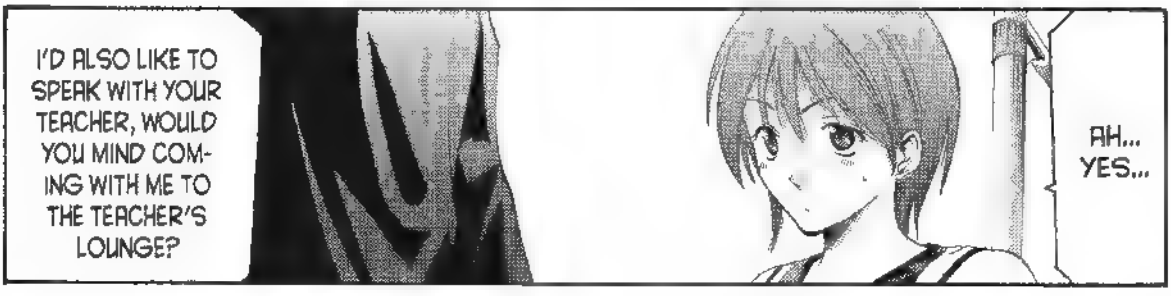
I'M SASAOKA FROM THE ADIREX SALES DEPARTMENT.
BOW
HOW DO YOU DO!

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE ON THIS SCHOOL'S TRACK TEAM.
YOU TWO KNOW EACH OTHER?
WELL... KIND OF.

AH, YAMATO-KUN!
HUH!? SASAOKA-SAN.

OUR COMPANY IS VISITING HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE TOKYO DISTRICT AND MEETING WITH SOME OF THE MOST PROMISING ATHLETES LIKELY TO BE COMPETING IN THIS YEAR'S INTER-HIGH MEET.
COULD I HAVE A MOMENT WITH YOU?

AH, SORRY...
SO... WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE TODAY?

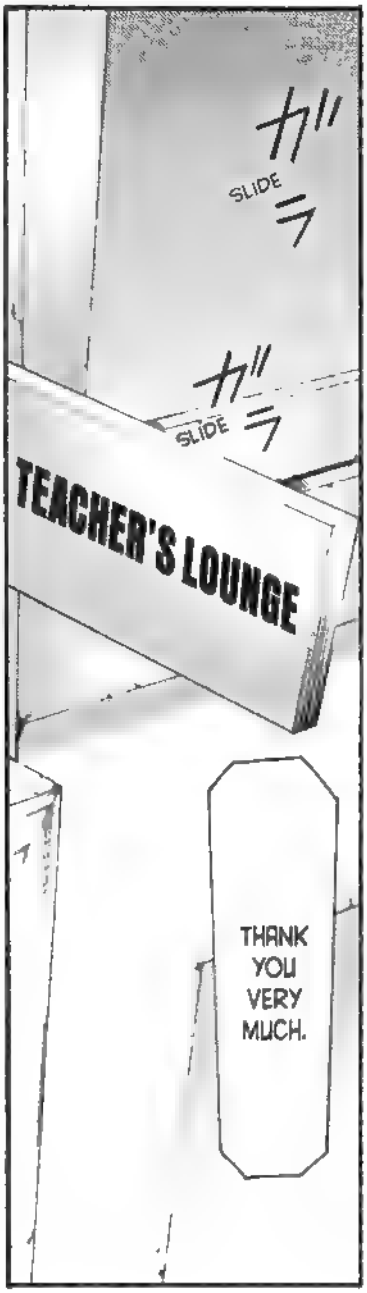

I'D ALSO LIKE TO SPEAK WITH YOUR TEACHER, WOULD YOU MIND COMING WITH ME TO THE TEACHER'S LOUNGE?
AH... YES...

ALL RIGHT...
W-WELL, GUESS I'LL SEE YOU LATER, OKAY.

OH, HE'S FROM A SPORTING GOODS COMPANY.
WHAT'S GOING ON!? WHAT'S HE DOING HERE!!?
WHAT'S THEIR PROB-LEM?
WHY DIDN'T THEY TALK TO YOU, AKITSUKI-KUN!
APPARENTLY, THEY'RE GOING AROUND TOKYO TALKING TO ATHLETES WHO ARE GONNA BE COMPETING IN THE I.H. MEET.
WHAT!?

YOU WERE IN FIRST PLACE AT THE TOKYO DISTRICT PRELIMINARY AND YOU EVEN HAD THE RECORD FOR THE YEAR...AT LEAST FOR A LITTLE WHILE, RIGHT?
IF YOU'D HAD THAT TIME IN LAST YEAR'S I.H. YOU'D HAVE WON!
I CAN'T BLAME 'EM. I DIDN'T EVEN PASS THE PRELIMINARIES LAST YEAR.
BUT...
じ
GLARE
AREN'T YOU COLD IN THAT SKIMPY LITTLE OUTFIT?
IT'S FEBRUARY, YOU KNOW?
EXCUSE ME?
WHAT...
WHAT'S WRONG?
WHO CARES ABOUT WHAT I'M WEARING!!
WE'RE TALKING ABOUT YOU RIGHT NOW!
WHATEVER? I'M JUST WORRIED ABOUT YOU, ALL RIGHT?
SHUT UP, STUPID!!

OH, IT'S NO PROB-LEM.
SORRY OUR LIT-TLE TALK TOOK SO LONG...


SLIDE
SLIDE
TEACHER'S LOUNGE
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

WELL, JUST THINK IT OVER
IT COULD BE A REALLY GOOD OPPOR-TUNITY FOR YOU.

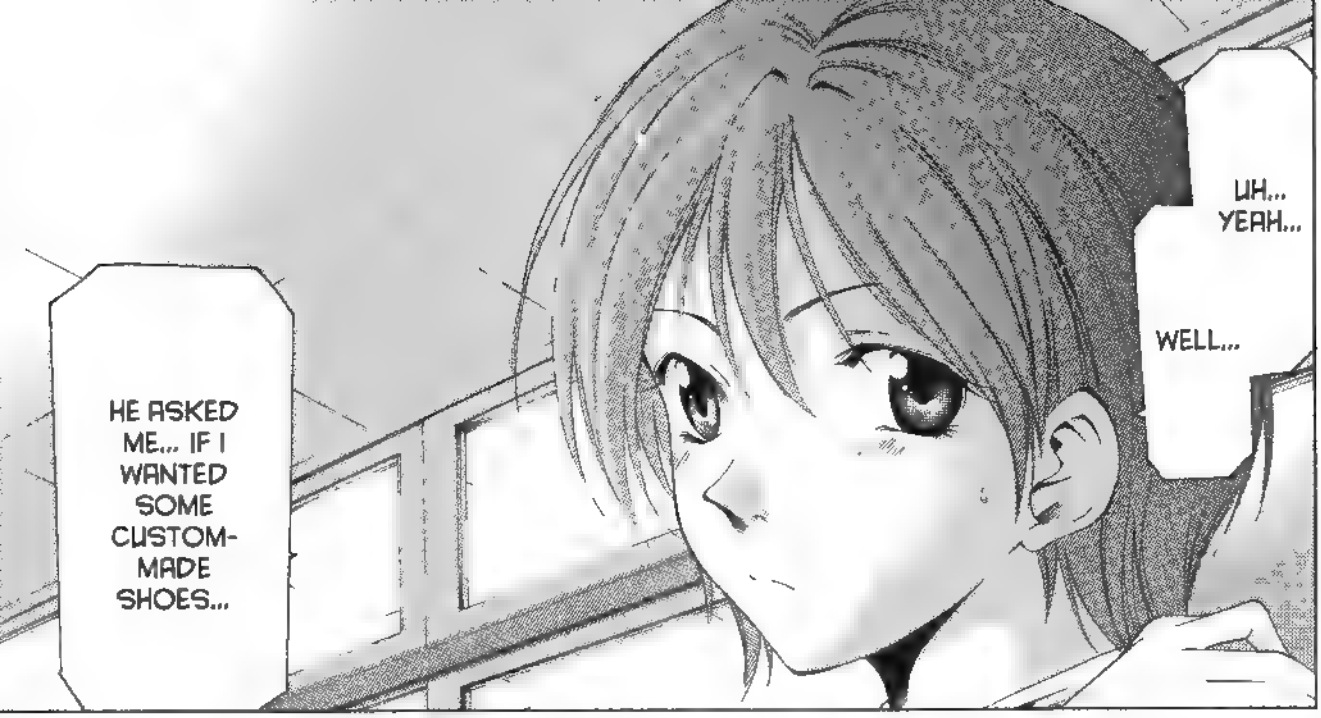
OKAY.
THANKS.
OKAY, I'LL COME BACK SOON AND...
...WE CAN TALK SPECIF-ICS.
カツン... CLOPPA
カツン... CLOPPA
1-C
AH...
MY BAG...
カラッ
SLIDE

HEY...
TOOK YA LONG ENOUGH.

YAMATO-KUN...

SO?
HOW DID IT GO?

WERE YOU WAITING FOR ME ALL THIS TIME?
STEP
YEAH!


HE ASKED ME... IF I WANTED SOME CUSTOM-MADE SHOES...
UH... YEAH...
WELL...

I GUESS WITH YOU, IT'S DIFFERENT, SINCE YOU'VE ALREADY BEEN IN THE I.H./
THE OTHER DAY, I ASKED HIM IF HE'D MAKE A PAIR FOR ME, BUT HE SAID NO.

WHAT?
WHAT'S WRONG? AREN'T YOU HAPPY?

WOW!! THAT'S AWESOME!!
HUH...?

SHOULDN'T YOU BE WORRYING ABOUT YOURSELF?

WHAT?

THINK ABOUT IT. I GET THIS GREAT OPPORTUNITY AND YOU DON'T EVEN FEEL LEFT BEHIND OR ANYTHING...
INSTEAD YOU JUST SIT THERE SMILING LIKE AN IDIOT!
THIS SHOULD'VE AT LEAST MOTIVATED YOU TO TRY HARDER.

I JUST DON'T LIKE YOUR ATTITUDE!!
WHAT ARE YOU SO MAD ABOUT? DID I SAY SOMETHING WEIRD?
WHAT'S GOING ON...?
WHAT...
CLANK
THINK ABOUT IT! LAST YEAR'S INTER-HIGH COMPETITION, THE DISTRICT COMPETITION...?
AND THE TRAINING CAMP, TOO...
I ALWAYS END UP BY MYSELF!
.....

WHAT...?

Um...

ARE YOU GONNA MAKE ME GO TO THE INTER-HIGH ALONE THIS YEAR, TOO?

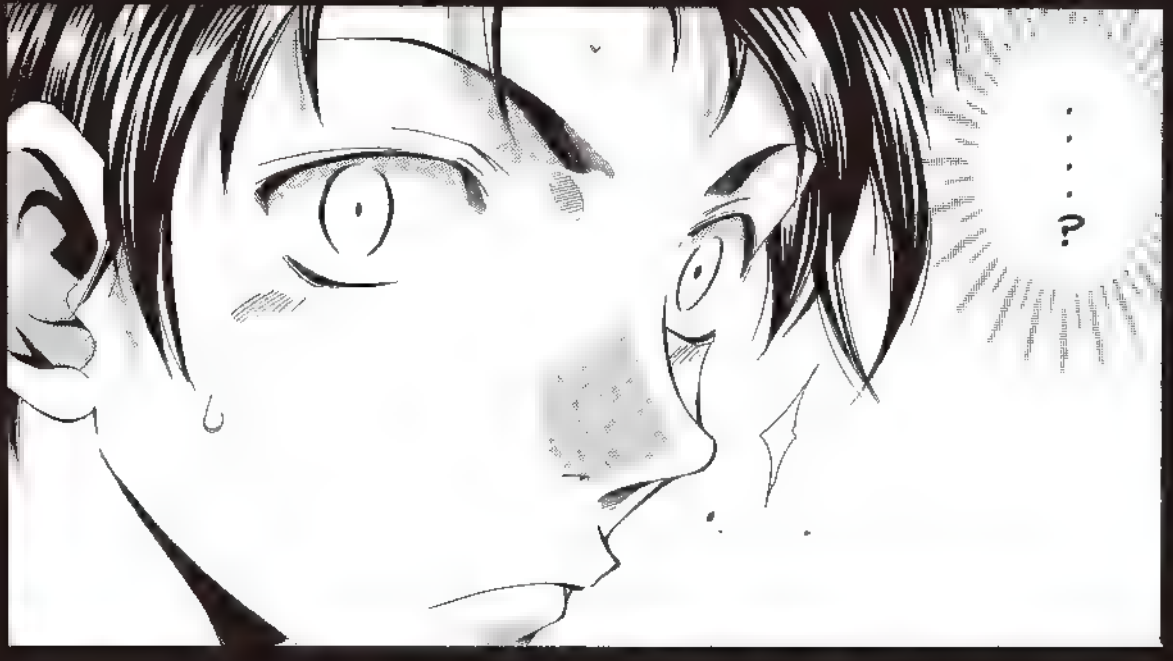
I-I GET IT...
ASAHINA WANTS TO GO THERE WITH ME...
WHAT...?
SORRY...
BUT...
JUST BECAUSE WE'RE BACK TOGETHER, DOESN'T MEAN I CAN STOP TRAINING.
I GUESS...I WAS JUST SO HAPPY ABOUT GETTING BACK TOGETHER WITH YOU...
...THAT I HADN'T REALLY BEEN CONCEN-TRATING ON MY TRAIN-ING...

I'M GONNA TRY AS HARD AS I CAN.
LET'S MAKE IT TO THE INTER-HIGH TOGETHER THIS YEAR!
OKU-?

TH-THIS YEAR?
HEY, MIHO. ARE YOU GOING TO GIVE YAMATO-KUN VALENTINE'S CHOCOLATE THIS YEAR, TOO?
PLINK
LAST YEAR I MANAGED TO GET ONE "GIRI-CHOCO" FROM HER...
BUT HER REAL CHOCOLATE WENT TO THAT YAMATO GUY...
GOD DAMN IT! SHE'S GIVING YAMATO CHOCO-LATE AGAIN?
THIS YEAR...?
TSUYOSHI KUSAKABE (EIGHTH GRADE), HAS A HUGE CRUSH ON MIHO-CHAN.

SUZUKA

#95 Do Over



CHATTER
CHATTER
2-B
SHE REALLY LIKED HIM LAST YEAR, BUT THIS YEAR SHE'S NOT GIVING HIM ANY CHOC-OLATE...?
WHAT'S GOING ON...?
SHE LIKES SOME OTHER GUY...
MAYBE...
. . . . . !!
GLANCE
OH, NO...

PANT
SHOCK
ドキッ
AH...!?
SHE USED TO JUST IGNORE ME, BUT NOW SHE SAYS "GOOD MORNING" TO ME EVERY DAY.
C-COME TO THINK OF IT, SOMETIMES IT FEELS LIKE I CATCH HER LOOKING AT ME.
DING
DONG
OH MY GOD!
COULD THIS REALLY BE HAPPENING!?
THUMP
THUMP

FEBRU-
ARY
14TH
GOOD MORN-ING!
HEY, HEARD WE GET FREE STUDY TIME IN FIRST PERIOD TODAY.
REALLY!?
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
I SAW HER BUYING INGREDIENTS FOR MAKING CHOCOLATE AT THE MARKET YESTERDAY.
THAT MEANS SHE'S DEFINITELY PLANNING ON GIVING SOME CHOCOLATE TO SOMEBODY.
WHO...
...COULD IT BE...?
IT'S GOTTA BE ME, RIGHT?

IT MUST BE ME...!!
NONE IN MY LOCKER, NONE IN MY BAG, AND EVEN MY SHOE CUBBY WAS EMPTY, SO...
THERE'S NO CHOCO-LATE IN MY DESK...
...OR IN MY SHOE CUBBY

SWUP
AH!! I KNOW...!
MAYBE SHE WENT HOME BECAUSE SHE GOT TIRED OF WAITING FOR ME TO FINISH PRACTICE.
SHE PROBABLY GOT EMBARRASSED WRITING BY HERSELF AFTER SCHOOL!!
THAT MAKES SENSE.
YEAH. THAT MUST BE IT!!
AH... BUT SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHERE I LIVE, SO SHE CAN'T BRING IT TO ME...
WHISPER
WHISPER
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
GUESS I HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE...
I'LL HAVE TO GO SEE HER.

ASHIYU BATHS

MAYBE I SHOULD JUST STOP...
...GIVING HIM CHOCOLATES...

AH...!

H-HEY!
.....
WHAT?
UH-HUH, WELL... BYE...
TSUYOSHI-KUN... YOU HEADING HOME FROM PRACTICE?
Y-YEAH. PRACTICE WENT REALLY LONG TODAY...
UH...IS THAT...
WHAT?
HEY GUYS!!

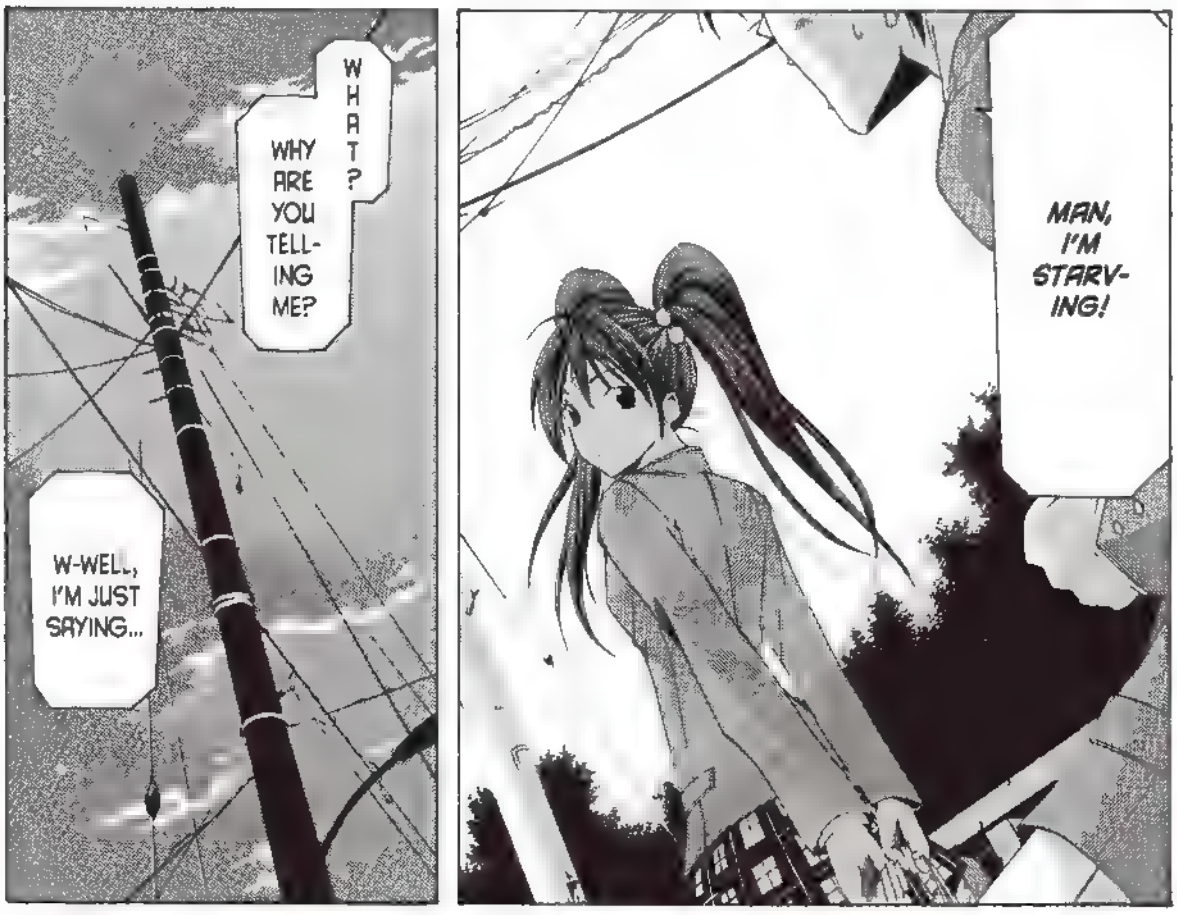
YAMATO AKITSUKI, REPORTING BACK TO BASE!
YAMATO AKITSUKI...!?
WHAT...!?
. . . !
. . . !!
SO THIS IS YAMATO...
HMMPH... HE LOOKS LIKE A PRETTY AVERAGE GUY.
SORRY. I HAD TRACK PRACTICE..
YOU'RE LATE, YAMATO-KUN. I'VE BEEN WAITING FOREVER.
AH..

W-WELL, I'VE GOT TO GO, FUJI-KAWA!
ALL RIGHT, SEE YA.
AH... IS THIS YOUR FRIEND?
HUH? OH... YOU'RE STILL HERE TSUYOSHI-KUN?
AH, YEAH.
WHY WERE YOU WAITING FOR ME?
WELL... I JUST WANTED TO...
SHIT... WHAT THE HELL!!
SHE'S GIVING CHOCOLATE TO HIM AFTER ALL!!
SHIT!!
SHIT!!
SO WHY THE HELL'D SHE STRING ME ALONG LIKE THAT?!
DID SHE HAVE TO LOOK SO FREAKIN' HAPPY IN FRONT OF HIM?

YAMATO-KUN!
WHERE ARE YOU GUYS GOING?
ASAHINA'S TAKING ME OUT TO DINNER.
I GOT US RESERVA-TIONS.
SHE TR ED MAKING HOMEMADE CHOCO-LATES, BUT SHE KEPT MESSING UP, SO...
BLEAH
SHUT YOUR MOUTH!
YANK
WE CAN GO RIGHT NOW!

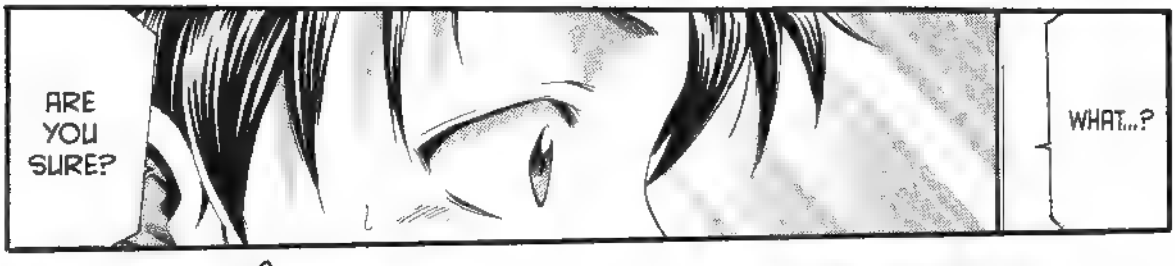
OH...IT'S NOTHING! DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!!
AH...MIHO-CHAN, YOU SAID YOU WERE WRITING FOR SOMETHING...?
THANKS, MIHO-CHAN. SEE YOU LATER
I'LL TELL MOM YOU WON'T BE NEEDING DINNER TONIGHT!!
WELL, HAVE FUN, YOU GUYS!
RUSTLE
FROM NOW ON...
...WON'T NEED THIS GIRI CHOCO ANYMORE
H-HEY WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH THAT?
NOTHING NOW
FUJI-KAWA
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE GIRI CHOCO TO ME. LOOKS MORE LIKE THE REAL DEAL

.....


MAN, I'M STARV-ING!
WHAT? WHY ARE YOU TELL-ING ME?
W-WELL, I'M JUST SAYING...

AFTER A HARD DAY OF PRACTICE, IT'D SURE BE NICE TO HAVE SOME-THING SWEET TO EAT.
I WONDER IF THERE'S ANY SWEETS AROUND HERE.
AHHH, I'M STARVING TO DEATH. I'D EAT ANYTHING RIGHT NOW...
I CAN'T STAND TO SEE HER LOOKING SO SAD...!!
TSUYOSHI-KUN...

HERE. SINCE YOU SOUND SO PATHETIC, I'LL LET YOU HAVE THIS!
OKAY, FINE...


ARE YOU SURE?
WHAT...?

FWISH
W-WELL, I PROMISE I'LL EAT EVERY LAST BIT OF IT, NO MATTER HOW BAD IT TASTES.
WHAT-EVER... LATER.

BUT YOU'D BETTER SAVOR EVERY BITE!
I MADE IT FROM SCRATCH!

CLOPPA
CLOPPA
AH...
GEEZ...
WHY IS SHE SO COLD?
SHE MADE THIS CHOCO-LATE FOR YAMATO, NOT FOR ME...
SHE BARELY EVEN KNOWS I EXIST.
GUESS TOTALLY MIS-READ...
...THE WAY OUR EYES KEPT MEETING, AND...
STEP
...HER SAYING GOOD MORN-ING TO ME EVERY DAY.
BUT NEXT YEAR...

NEXT YEAR...
HUH...?
NEXT YEAR I'M GONNA GET AT LEAST...
...A LITTLE BIT CLOSER TO HER.

SUZUKA

#96 The Secret

OH, NO. I'M SORRY FOR TAKING UP SO MUCH OF YOUR TIME.
THANKS... ...FOR COMING OUT HERE TO SEE ME SO MANY TIMES.

THANKS.
OKAY.

WHAT...?
S THIS ABOUT YOUR SHOES?

TOMOR-ROW IS A HOLIDAY, SO I'D LIKE TO VISIT YOUR FAMILY'S HOME.
I'LL PICK YOU UP AT YOUR APARTMENT AT ELEVEN.

OH YEAH? WOW, THIS IS GETTING PRETTY SERIOUS!
YEAH...
YEAH.
HE'S GOING TO VISIT MY PARENTS TOMOR-ROW.
HE WANTS ME TO COME ALONG.
I HAVE TO MAKE IT TO THE INTER-HIGH MEET, SO I CAN GET MY OWN PAIR OF CUSTOM SHOES!!
I'VE GOTTA WORK HARDER, TOO!
.....?
.....

HUH?
OH, IT'S NOTH-ING!
WHAT'S WRONG? WHY SO QUIET?
WHAT!?
AH... HEY...
GO CHANGE, I'LL WAIT FOR YOU AT THE GATE.
SHE'S SURE ACTING WEIRD.
WELL...
THAT'S NOTHING NEW...
カツン
CLOP
カツン
CLOP

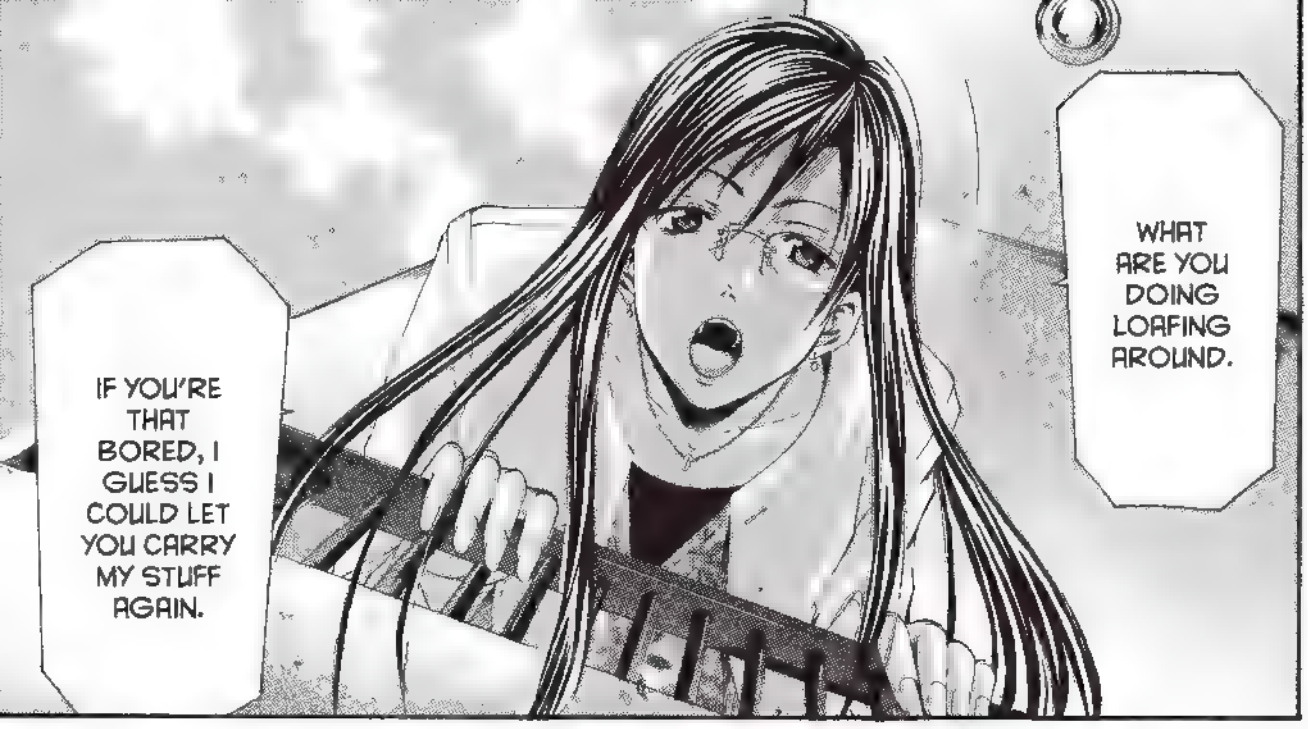
THE FOL-
LOWING
DAY

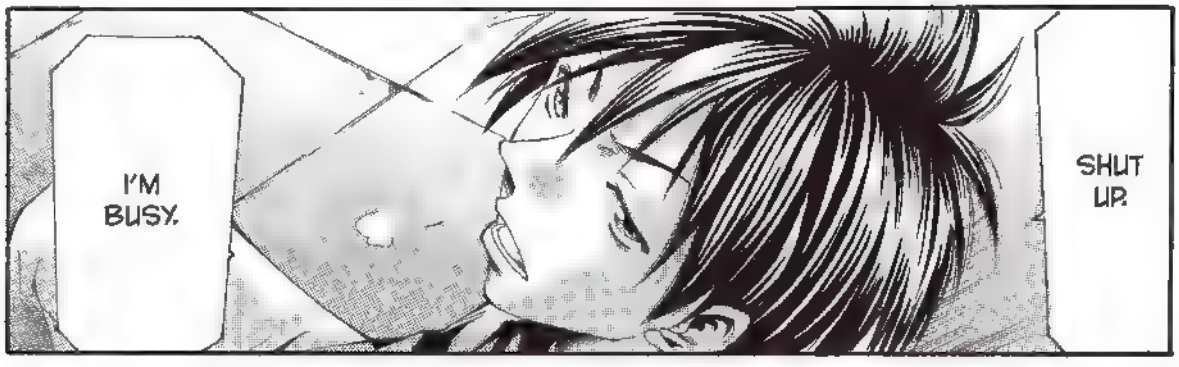
AH THIS SUCKS, I'VE GOT THE DAY OFF, BUT THERE'S NOTHING TO DO.
WHEN IS ASAHINA GONNA BE DONE TALKING ABOUT THOSE STUPID SHOES.

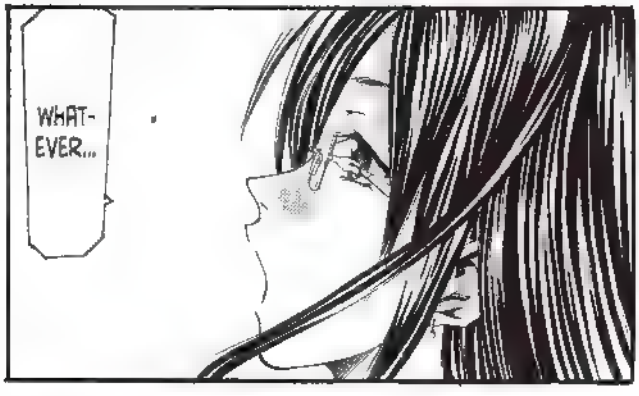
YAMATO-KUN. WILL YOU PUT SOME FUEL IN THE HEATER PLEASE!?
SLIDE
OKAY.

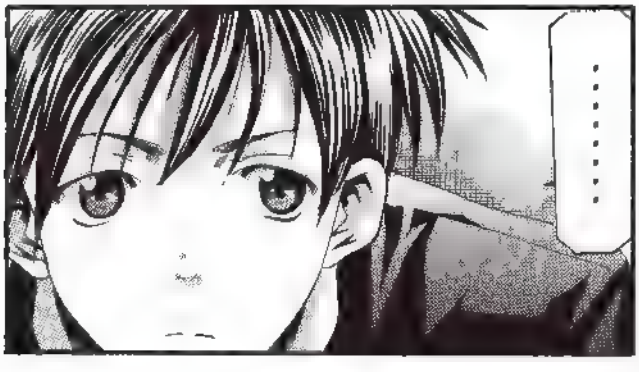
IT'S SO NICE OUT TODAY.
I WANTED TO GO SOMEWHERE WITH HER...

ARE YOU GONNA MAKE ME GO TO THE INTER-HIGH ALONE THIS YEAR, TOO?
カラン CLOPPA
.....
SHE'S RIGHT...
I SHOULDN'T BE SITTING AROUND LIKE THIS.
FALUMP
I'VE GOTTA MAKE IT INTO THE INTER-HIGH WITH HER...!
HEY!
KALANK
KALANK
KALANK

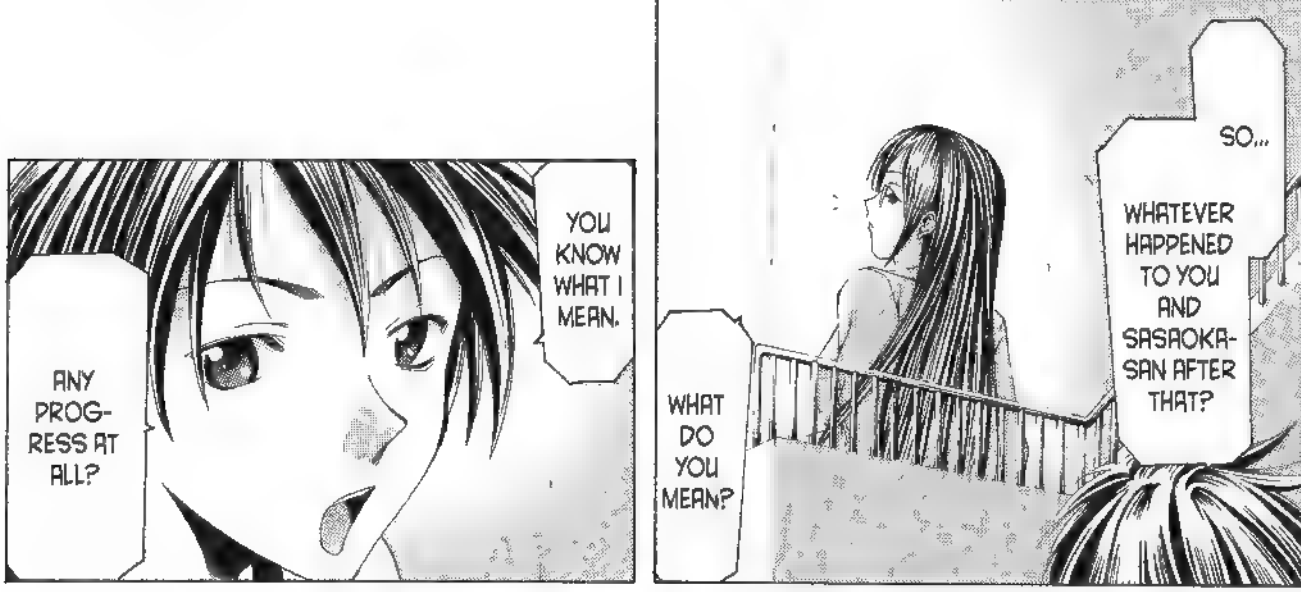

WHAT ARE YOU DOING LOAFING AROUND.
IF YOU'RE THAT BORED, I GUESS I COULD LET YOU CARRY MY STUFF AGAIN.


I'M BUSY.
SHUT UP.


WHAT-EVER...


.....

WELL, YOU SURE DON'T LOOK IT.
I'M JUST TAK-ING A BREAK RIGHT NOW.


SO...
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO YOU AND SASAOKA-SAN AFTER THAT?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.
ANY PROG-RESS AT ALL?

NOT REALLY.
SAME AS USUAL.

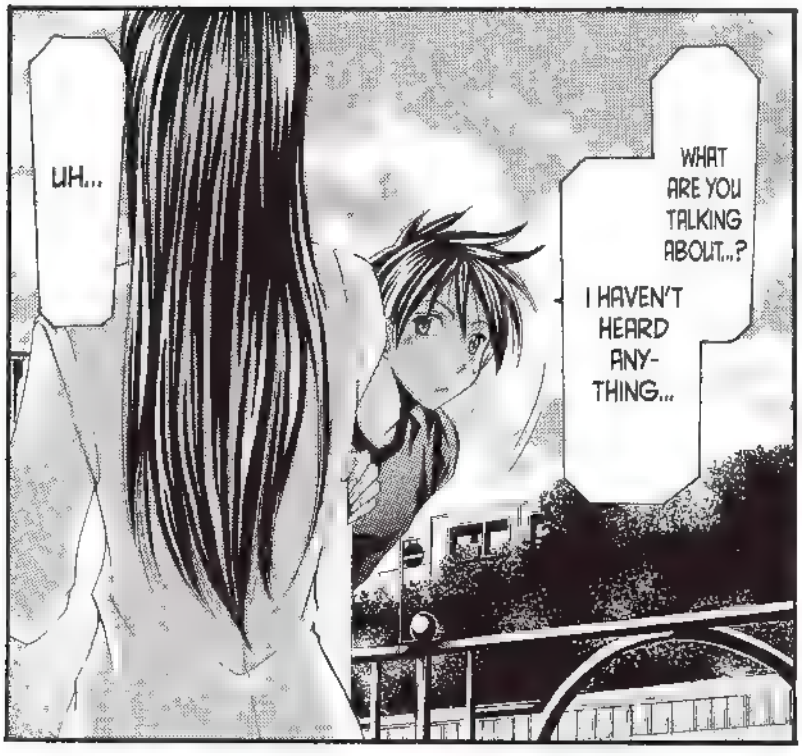
.....
WHAT IF HE GETS SENT TO WORK IN THE STATES AGAIN?

.....

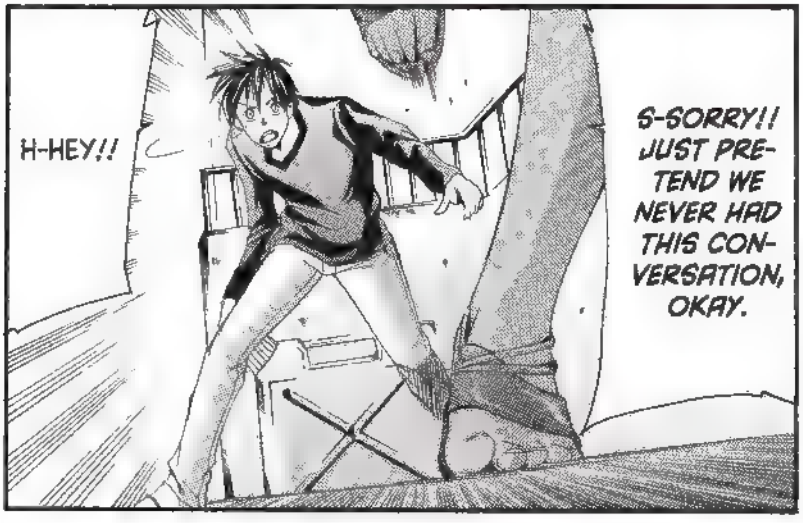
HE'S GOING TO THE STATES ON A BUSI-NESS TRIP.
SO, I CAN'T REALLY BOTHER HIM RIGHT NOW.
REALLY? WOW, HE'S A BUSY GUY.
YEAH, HE'S THE EXACT OPPO-SITE OF YOU.

WELL...
THEN I'LL BE IN THE SAME SITUATION AS YOU.
WHAT..? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN..?
SUZUKA-CHAN WILL BE GONE...
...COME SEPTEMBER, RIGHT?

GONE?
.....

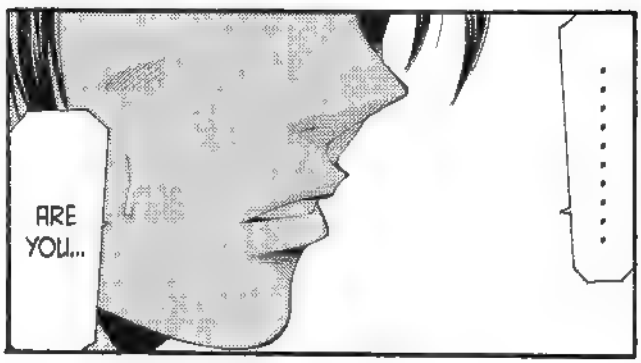

UH...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT..?
I HAVEN'T HEARD ANY-THING...

OH...
DIDN'T SHE TELL YOU?
I HEARD SHE WAS REALLY EXCITED ABOUT IT SO I JUST ASSUMED THAT SHE'D TOLD YOU...


H-HEY!!
S-SORRY!! JUST PRE-TEND WE NEVER HAD THIS CON-VERSATION, OKAY.

WHAT THE HELL?
.....

...KUN
YAMATO...


ARE YOU...
.....

HUH? WHAT'S WRONG?
UH... WELL...I HEARD THIS RUMOR...

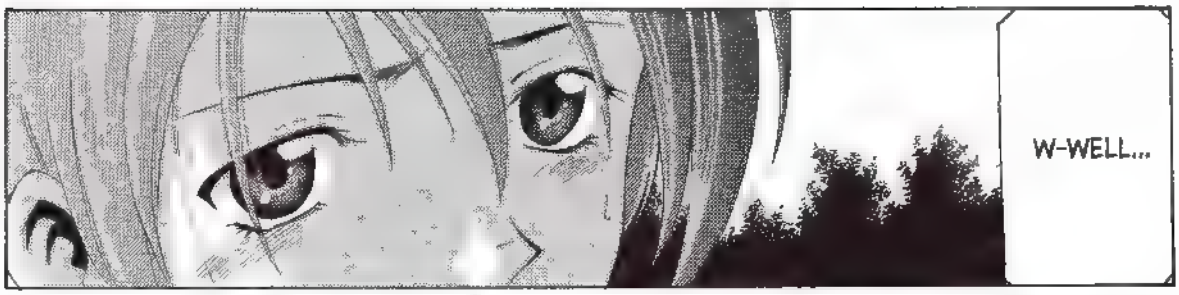
...GOING SOMEWHERE IN SEPTEM-BER...?
....!

UH...
W-WHO TOLD YOU THAT?
IT'S TRUE THEN?
SO...
YEAH...
.....

I'M THINK-ING ABOUT...
...STUDYING ABROAD IN AMERICA...

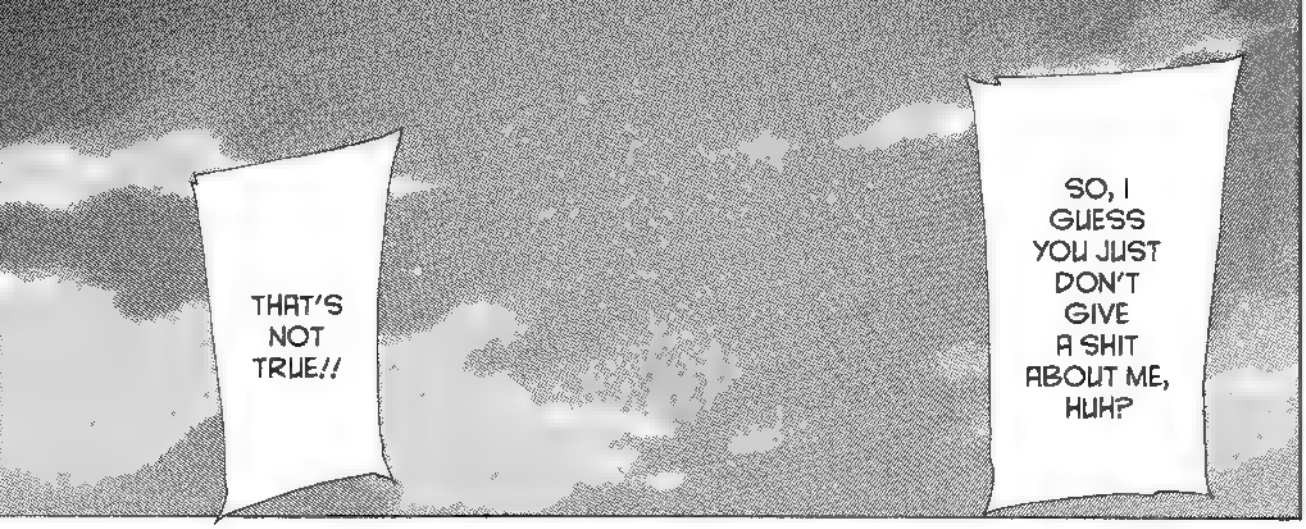
WHAT...?
AMERICA...?
THAT'S ACTUALLY WHAT MY MEETING WITH SASAOKA-SAN WAS ABOUT.
...IT WASN'T JUST THE SHOES.
SASAOKA-SAN'S FIRM IS TALKING TO A FEW ATH-LETES...
THEY'RE GONNA BE COVER NG TU ITION AND EXPENSES, TOO...
SO...
I PROBABLY WON'T...
...BE ABLE TO BE IN THE INTER-HIGH THIS YEAR...
.....!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU...?
ASAHIYU BATHS

WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME!?
DIDN'T YOU THINK I MIGHT WANNA KNOW?


W-WELL...

STILL...!!
YOU COULD'VE AT LEAST TOLD ME WHAT WAS GOING ON.

I MEAN... AREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO SAID WE SHOULD GO TO THE INTER-HIGH TOGETHER!
WELL, THAT WAS BEFORE I KNEW THAT I MIGHT BE GOING ABROAD.


THAT'S NOT TRUE!!
SO, I GUESS YOU JUST DON'T GIVE A SHIT ABOUT ME, HUH?

I CARE ABOUT YOU A LOT BUT...
THERE'S A LOT GOING ON IN MY LIFE RIGHT NOW...!!

.....!!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN!!?
THERE'S JUST A LOT GOING ON.

CONTINUED IN VOLUME 12

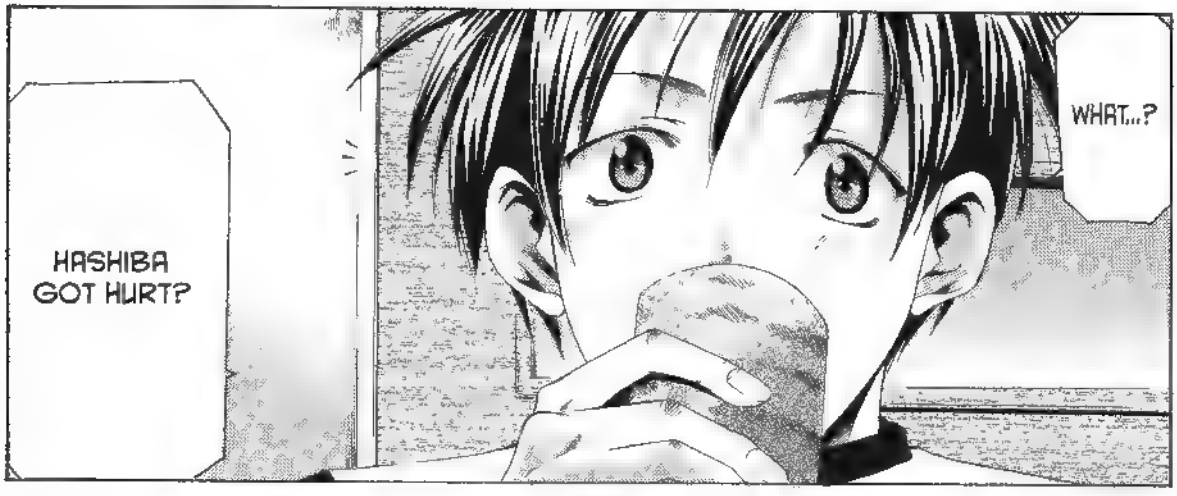
MIKI

SUZUKA

SPECIAL BONUS MANGA

MIKI

ASAHIYU BATHS
DECEMBER 31ST

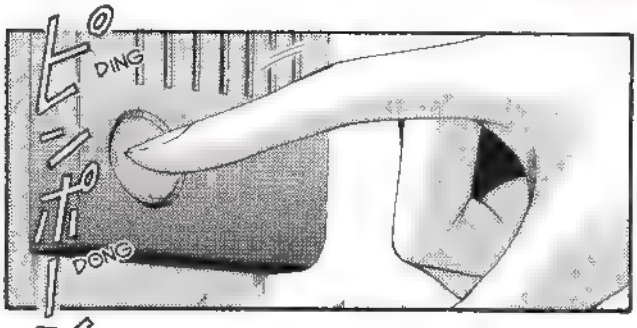

HASHIBA GOT HURT?
WHAT...?

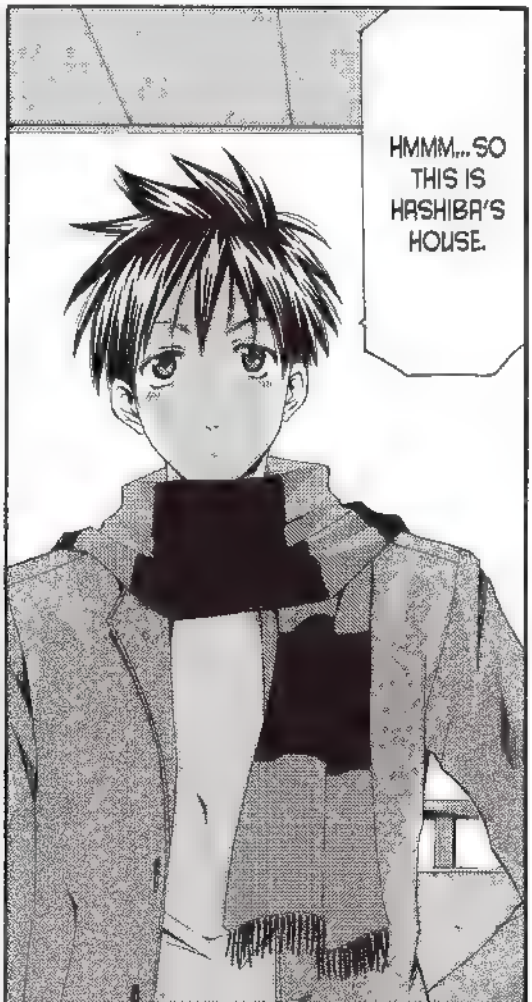
YEAH.
SHE E-MAILED ME SAYING IT'S NOTHING SERIOUS, BUT I'M WORRIED ABOUT HER...
THE THING IS, I'M BUSY TILL THE EVENING SO, I DON'T THINK I CAN VISIT HER TODAY...
WELL, I WOULDN'T WORRY TOO MUCH.
I MEAN, IF SHE WAS ABLE TO E-MAIL YOU, SHE MUST BE OKAY.
YOU'RE SO COLD! WHAT IF SHE'S HURT REALLY BAD!?

OH, WILL YOU GIVE THIS TO HER!?
I'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO ANYWAY.
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. I'LL GO VISIT HER FOR YOU.
UH...
YOU'RE GONNA GET HER SOME-THING, TOO, RIGHT?
WHAT'S THAT? A GET-WELL GIFT?
IT'S A PRESENT. TODAY IS MIKI'S BIRTHDAY.
AWW, MAN. CAN'T I JUST SAY IT'S FROM BOTH OF US?
WHAT!?
I'M K DDING. I'M K DDING. I'LL GO GET SOMETHING FOR HER...

1310

HASHIBA

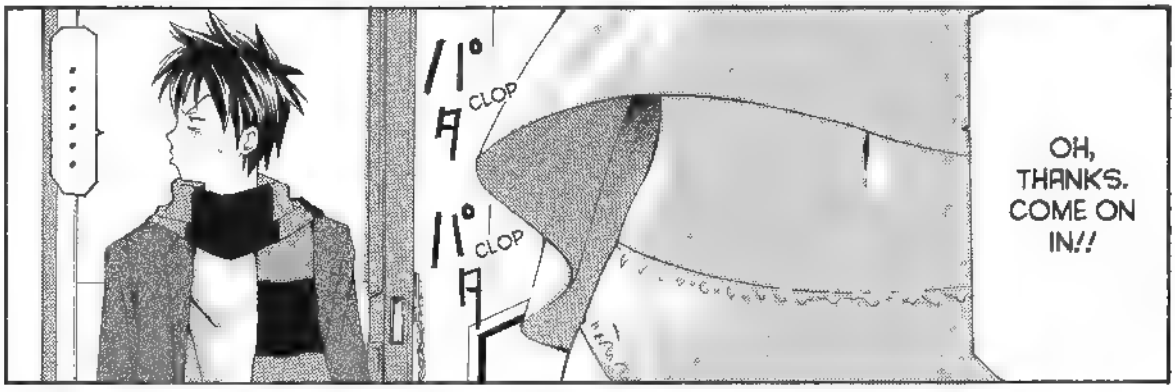




GEEZ, CAN'T YOU OPEN THE DOOR BY YOURSELF!?
カチャ
CLICK
I TOLD YOU MY LEG HURTS!
WHAT...?
AKITSUKI?

AND TO GIVE YOU YOUR BIRTHDAY PRESENTS...
THE BIG ONE'S FROM ASAHINA...

I THOUGHT YOU WERE MY LITTLE BROTHER. WHAT ARE YOU DOING COMING ALL THE WAY OUT TO MY HOUSE?
W-WELL... I JUST CAME TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE OKAY...


.....
CLOP
CLOP
OH, THANKS. COME ON IN!!

NO, BUT...
IS MY HOUSE THAT WEIRD?
WHAT'S WRONG? WHY ARE YOU SO QUIET?

THE DOCTOR SAID MY JOINTS ARE INFLAMED. I GUESS I PUSHED MYSELF A LITTLE TOO HARD.
HMM...
PLUNK

W-WOULD YOU MIND...
...PUTTING SOME CLOTHES ON...?

OH...
AH... SORRY. DOES THIS BOTHER YOU?
I JUST FIGURED THESE WERE PRETTY MUCH THE SAME AS MY GYM SHORTS, SO...
THEY'RE NOT THE SAME AT ALL!!
HAVE YOU NO SHAME?
HEY, AKIT-SUKI.
DID YOU EVER MANAGE TO CALL SUZUKA BY HER FIRST NAME?
ZIP
WHAT...?
N-NO...I JUST COULDN'T DO IT.
I WANT TO, BUT I'M TOO EMBAR-RASSED.
I FIGURED YOU'D JUST GIVE UP...
YOU STILL CALL ME 'HASHIBA' TOO.
.....

PRAC-
TICING?
HEY...
YOU
KNOW
WHAT!?
WHY
DON'T
YOU TRY
PRACTIC-
ING ON
ME!?
YEAH!
FROM
NOW ON,
JUST TRY
CALLING
ME "MIKI."
OR ELSE
I WON'T
ANSWER,
ALL
RIGHT?
IF YOU
CAN'T EVEN
CALL ME BY
MY FIRST
NAME,
YOU'LL
NEVER GET
ANYWHERE
WITH
SUZUKA.
I GUESS
YOU'RE
RIGHT...
WHAT...?
OH GREAT,
ANOTHER
ONE OF
HER WEIRD
LITTLE
GAMES.

I'VE GOT TWO LITTLE BROTHERS. IT AIN'T EASY.
WELL, BOTH OF MY PARENTS WORK, AND
WOW! YOU MAKE YOUR OWN LUNCH?
ALL RIGHT. I'M GOING TO MAKE SOME LUNCH, SO WHY DON'T YOU TRY CALLING ME BY MY FIRST NAME WHILE I'M COOKING.
YOU'RE MORE MATURE THAN I THOUGHT, HASHIBA...
WOW...
I GUESS THE GAME HAS ALREADY STARTED...
AH...
.....
トン
CHOP
トン
CHOP
トン
CHOP
BUBBLE
BUBBLE

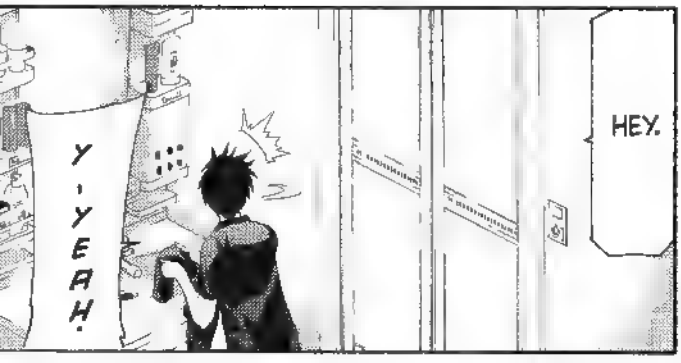
HMMM...
PERFECT!
I-IT ACTUALLY MAKES IT HARDER WHEN SHE TELLS ME I HAVE TO CALL HER BY HER FIRST NAME...LIKE THE PRESSURE'S ON OR SOMETHING.
.....
.....
SHUFFLE
SHUFFLE
MMM... SMELLS GOOD. IS THAT NIKUJAGA?
AH... SURE.
WANNA TRY SOME?
HUH?
HERE.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU MADE THIS YOURSELF...
MMMM... THIS IS REALLY GOOD...

YOU'RE A GREAT COOK, HASHI...
IT'S REALLY GOOD!!
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
YEP!
.....
GLARE
WHAT? WHAT DID YOU SAY? I CAN'T HEAR YOU.
M-MIKI= MUMBLE...
OH...
NOPE, TRY AGAIN!!
C-COME ON. I SAID IT ONCE!
GO ON, SAY IT AGAIN! LOUDER THIS TIME!

YOU'RE A GREAT COOK, MIKI!!
I'M REALLY IMPRESSED, MIKI!!
.....
WH—
WHAT NOW?
IT'S ACTUALLY PRETTY WEIRD TO HEAR YOU SAY IT.
WHAT!? YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TOLD ME TO DO IT!!

GOD!! GET AWAY FROM ME!!
SWISH
N-NO WAY.
FORGET THAT!
THAT'S NOT FAIR. YOU SHOULD HAVE TO CALL ME "YAMATO" NOW!!
AH...
SPLASH
WAH!!
CLICK
OFF
OFF
DAMN IT! I JUST TOOK A SHOWER!!
S-SORRY...
BUBBLE
BUBBLE
AH... OKAY...
I'M GONNA GO TAKE ANOTHER SHOWER.
YOU'D BETTER WASH THAT SHIRT BEFORE THE STAIN SETS.

FOR SOME REASON, SHE LOOKS SUPER HOT WHEN YOU CAN ONLY SEE HER SILHOUETTE IN THE SHOWER.
STARE
.....
SURE GOT ME


Y-YEAH!
HEY.

...ASK YOU SOME-THING?
CAN I...

AH... SURE. WHAT IS IT?
WHAT...?

HH
TSSSSSSS
P
P
P
P

YOU REALLY LIKE SUZUKA, DON'T YOU?
Y-YEAH... SURE...
I'VE BEEN WONDERING...
SQUINCH
...WHAT MADE YOU FALL SO MUCH IN LOVE WITH HER.
UHHH... WELLL...
I JUST FELT SOMETHING...
I WAS PASSING BY THE TRACK BEFORE I STARTED SCHOOL AND I SAW HER PRACTICING HIGH JUMP.
SHE JUST LOOKED AMAZING... I GUESS THAT'S WHAT DID IT.
WHAT!?
THAT'S ALL!?
YOU'RE SUCH A SIMPLE CREATURE.
S-SHUT UP!!

WHAT...?
SO, IF IT'D BEEN ME PRACTICING, MAYBE YOU'D HAVE FALLEN FOR ME INSTEAD OF SUZUKA.
JUST KIDDING!
.....
I MEAN, YOU SEEM TO REALLY BE IN LOVE WITH SUZUKA.
SPLASH

Y-YOU THINK SO...?
YEAH... SEEMS THAT WAY TO ME ANYWAY...
I GUESS... YOU'RE RIGHT...
YEAH...
HEY, THANK'S FOR COMING ALL THE WAY OUT HERE...
I'M REALLY GLAD YOU CAME.
S-SURE, NO PROB-LEM, BUT SHOULDN'T YOU BE RESTING?
...HASHIBA.
.....!

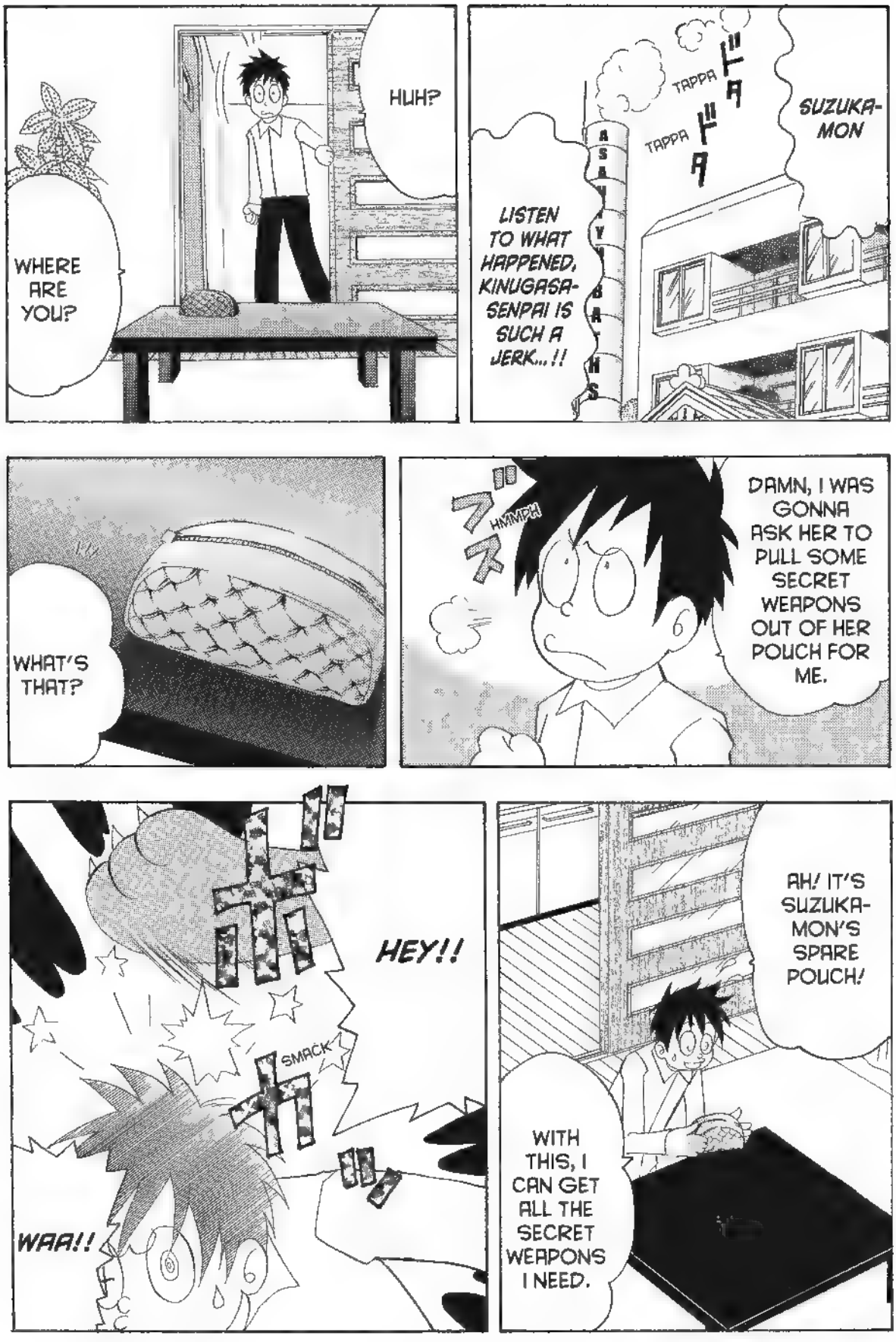
YEAH, YEAH. I KNOW...
SQUICH
.....
TSSS
YOU'RE SUCH AN ID OT, YAMATO.
HUH?
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
NOTH-NG!!
I SAID GET THE HELL OUT OF MY HOUSE, RIGHT NOW!
YOU IDIOT, AKIT-SUKI!!
W-WHAT ARE YOU SO MAD ABOUT, HASHIBA?
SHUT UP!!
THE END

SUZUKA-MON

EPISODE 4: INVISIBILITY CANDY!

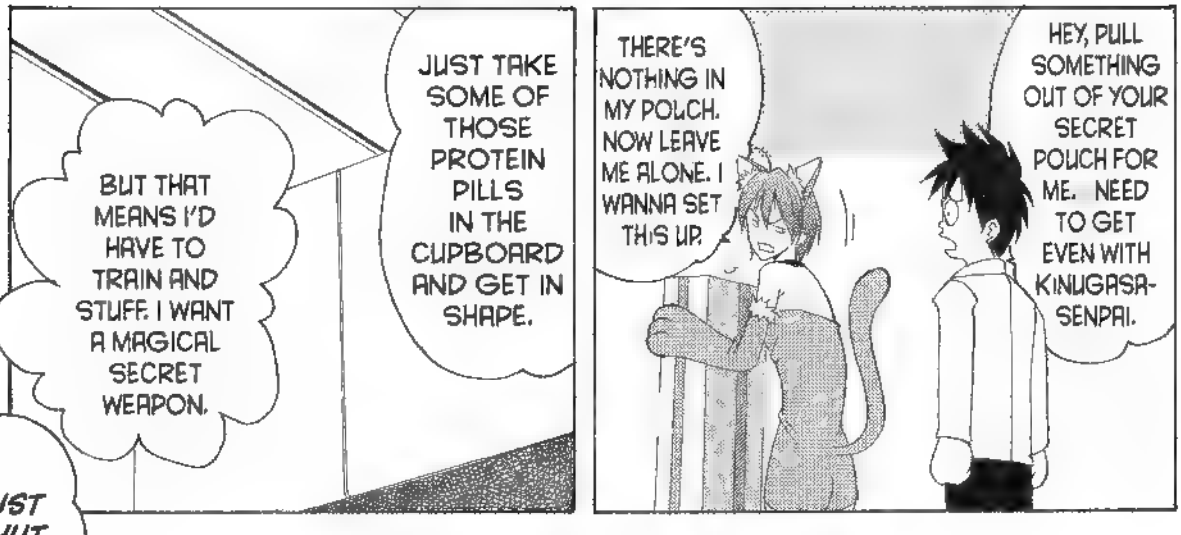
KABUTO COMICS

KOJI G. SEO


HUH?
WHERE ARE YOU?
TAPPA
TAPPA
SUZUKA-MON
ASAYI BATHS
LISTEN TO WHAT HAPPENED, KINUGASA-SENPAI IS SUCH A JERK...!!
WHAT'S THAT?
HMMPH
DAMN, I WAS GONNA ASK HER TO PULL SOME SECRET WEAPONS OUT OF HER POUCH FOR ME.
HEY!!
SMACK
WAA!!
AH! IT'S SUZUKA-MON'S SPARE POUCH!
WITH THIS, I CAN GET ALL THE SECRET WEAPONS I NEED.

I WAS JUST LOOK-ING FOR A SECRET WEAPON SO I COULD GET BACK AT KINUGASA-SENPAI...
THERE'S NOTHING IN THERE, YOU IDIOT!!
YOU, PERVERT!!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING WITH MY MAKEUP BAG!!

IT'S JUST A TABLE ON WHEELS THAT I ORDERED FROM THE HOME SHOP-PING CATALOG...
OUTER SPACE DEPARTMENT STORE? WHAT ARE YOU EVEN TALKING ABOUT?
HUH? WHAT'S THAT!?
DID YOU GET IT AT SOME FUTURISTIC OUTER SPACE DEPARTMENT STORE?


JUST TAKE SOME OF THOSE PROTEIN PILLS IN THE CUPBOARD AND GET IN SHAPE.
BUT THAT MEANS I'D HAVE TO TRAIN AND STUFF. I WANT A MAGICAL SECRET WEAPON.
JUST SHUT UP!
THERE'S NOTHING IN MY POUCH. NOW LEAVE ME ALONE. I WANNA SET THIS UP.
HEY, PULL SOMETHING OUT OF YOUR SECRET POUCH FOR ME. NEED TO GET EVEN WITH KINUGASA-SENPAI.

IT JUST LOOKS LIKE A REGULAR TIN OF COUGH DROPS TO ME.
JUST EAT ONE, AND YOU'LL BECOME INVISIBLE.
TEAR
TA-DAH
OH, FINE, HERE!
IT'S INVISIBILITY CANDY!!
HEY, AM I REALLY TURNING INVISIBLE?
I CAN SEE MYSELF...
YEAH, YOU'RE TOTALLY INVISIBLE.
O-OKAY. DON'T GET MAD.
SNKKT
JUST SHUT UP AND EAT ONE, BEFORE I WHOOP YOUR ASS!
WHAT A PEST...
STOMP
ドカ
ALL RIGHT!! TIME TO GET SOME REVENGE ON THAT JERK.
STOMP
ドカ
.....
YOINK
キョロ
OH MY GOD. WHERE ARE YOU, YAMATO-KUN. I CAN'T SEE YOU AT ALL!
YOINK
キョロ

!?
THWACK
AH... THERE HE IS!
SUZUKA-MON DOESN'T EVEN CARE ABOUT YAMATO-KUN! SO WHAT'S SHE DOING IN HIS HOUSE?
WHAT!?
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING!!?
OH MY GOD. WHERE IS YAMATO-KUN? I CAN'T SEE HIM AT ALL!
I THOUGHT SOMETHING WASN'T QUITE RIGHT. I MEAN, IT TASTED LIKE A REGULAR MINT CANDY!! YOU JUST GAVE ME SOME CANDIES YOU DIDN'T WANT.... DIDN'T YOU?
ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME!?
"HAKAYOSU" MARCH EDITION

THE END OF EPISODE 4

SUZUKA

COACH☆

THANKS TO ALL YOU *SUZUKA* FANS, THE TV ANIME VERSION OF *SUZUKA* WAS AN ENORMOUS SUCCESS. THE NEXT COUPLE OF PAGES CONTAIN SOME SPECIAL MESSAGES FROM THE COACH☆ GIRLS.
COACH☆ SANG *SUZUKA*'S OPENING AND CLOSING THEME SONGS, AND THEY ALSO DID SOME CHARACTER VOICES FOR THE ANIME. THE ILLUSTRATION HERE WAS DRAWN BY SEO-SENSEI. COPIES OF IT WERE HANDED OUT AT COACH☆ EVENTS SO THAT FANS COULD GET THEM AUTOGRAPHED BY THE GIRLS.

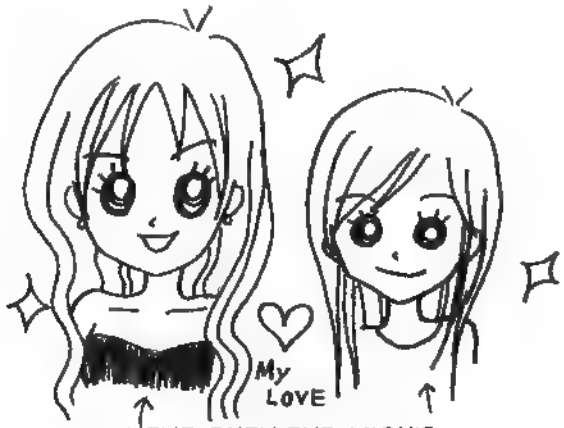
I'M AKESAKA FROM COACH☆.

I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT MY DRAWING IS ACTUALLY GETTING PRINTED IN A MANGA. I'M SO NERVOUS. MY HANDS ARE SHAKING UNCONTROLLABLY RIGHT NOW. WAAA, WAAA, WAAA!!! I DID THE VOICE OF MIHO-CHAN AND I ALSO SANG THE OPENING AND CLOSING THEME SONGS. IT WAS SO MUCH FUN, BUT THERE WAS ONE THING THAT I FELT REALLY EMBARRASSED ABOUT...I FELT SO AWKWARD WHEN I HAD TO SAY "YAMATO ONIICHAN" (OLDER BROTHER YAMATO), BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE ANY OLDER BROTHERS. EVERY WEEK, WHEN I HEAR THE WORDS "YAMATO ONIICHAN" ON TV, I KEEP TELLING MYSELF "THAT'S MIHO SAYING IT, NOT ME"...LIKE SOME KIND OF MANTRA...

SUZUKA IS SUCH A GREAT MANGA. I'M SO GLAD TO BE A PART OF THIS AMAZING TEAM!! IT WAS A REAL HONOR TO DO HONOKA'S VOICE... SNIFFLE SNIFF. I COULDN'T STOP CRYING TEARS OF JOY. THANK YOU, SEO-SENSEI!! NOW TELL ME, SEO-SENSEI, HOW CAN I BECOME AS CUTE AS HONOKA-CHAN? I REALLY WANT TO BE CUTE LIKE HER...

I'M HATSUMI MIURA OF COACH☆,

AND I DID THE VOICE OF MEGUMI-CHAN!! I WAS REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SAY HELLO TO ALL YOU *SUZUKA* FANS OUT THERE. THANK YOU, SEO-SENSEI!! IT WAS REALLY HARD DOING THE VOICE OF A DRUNK! THERE WAS A SCENE IN THE FIRST EPISODE WHERE YAMATO-KUN TRIPS AND PUSHES MEGUMI-CHAN ONTO THE FLOOR. MY LINE WAS "OUCH!!" AND I GUESS IT SOUNDED SO REAL THAT EVERYBODY AT THE RECORDING STUDIO BURST OUT LAUGHING WHEN I SAID IT. PLEASE WATCH FOR THAT PART ON THE DVD!!! *SUZUKA* IS A GREAT COMING OF AGE STORY AND I'M SO LUCKY THAT I GOT TO BE A PART OF IT. I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS NEXT!



NANA-CHAN AND MICHIE

HELLO! I'M MICHIE KITAURA OF COACH☆.

I'M SO HAPPY THAT I GOT TO PLAY A MANGA CHARACTER! AND I GOT TO DO THE VOICE OF THE CUTE IDOL SINGER, NANA-CHAN! I DID MY BEST TO SOUND CUTE FOR THE RECORDING. *SUZUKA* IS SUCH AN EXCITING STORY... SEO-SENSEI, PLEASE DON'T MAKE THE STORY ANY SADDER...

HI! I'M MANA FROM COACH☆. I'M REALLY GRATEFUL THAT I GOT TO SING THE OPENING AND CLOSING THEME SONGS FOR *SUZUKA!* AMAZING OPPORTUNITIES LIKE THIS DON'T COME AROUND TOO OFTEN, AM I RIGHT? IT MADE ME SO HAPPY AND I'LL ALWAYS TREASURE THIS EXPERIENCE. I STARTED READING SUZUKA AS SOON AS WE WERE OFFERED THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECORD THE THEME MUSIC. I WAS INSTANTLY HOOKED. YAMATO-KUN AND SUZUKA-CHAN... SUCH A BITTERSWEET ROMANCE... I WANT TO TASTE SOME OF THAT, TOO!

SEO-SENSEI, THANKS FOR CREATING SUCH A GREAT MANGA. I LOOK FORWARD TO READING MORE OF *SUZUKA*.

SUZUKA

DEAR *SUZUKA* FANS, SORRY ABOUT MY TERRIBLE DRAWING! THAT'S SUPPOSED TO BE SUZUKA.

Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more an art than a science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

Toshikoshi soba, page 59

Toshikoshi soba is a special kind of buckwheat noodle customarily served on New Year's Eve. "*Toshikoshi*" literally means something like "coming into the new year."

Koohaku, page 60

The *Koohaku* is a celebrity showdown in which two teams of pop stars, the red and the white, compete against each other by doing musical numbers. The show airs only on New Year's Eve and in many households watching the *Koohaku* is a New Year's tradition.

Hatsumode, page 63

It's Japanese tradition to visit a Shinto shrine during the first few days of the new year. The first shrine visit of the year is called *Hatsumode*.

Giri-choco, page 129

Giri-choco literally means something like "obligatory chocolate" or "duty chocolate." *Giri-choco* is used to describe the chocolate that girls give to guys on Valentine's day out of obligation. For example, if a woman gave chocolate to every man in her office, so that no one felt left out, she might refer to it as *giri-choco*. However, if a girl gave chocolate to her boyfriend, or a guy she was in love with, that would be considered "real" Valentine's chocolate.

Shoe cubby (*getabako*), page 134

Since most schools in Japan require students to change into their indoor shoes at school, each student gets a special shoe cubbyhole called *getabako*. The *getabako* is also notoriously used as a place to leave love letters and Valentine's gifts.

Nikujaga, page 175

Nikujaga literally means "meat and potatoes," and that's exactly what this famous comfort food is. It's a stew made with beef, potatoes, carrots, and onions. Simple but delicious.

Preview of Volume 12

We're pleased to present you a preview of *Suzuka,* volume 12. Please check our website (www.delreymanga.com) to see when this volume will be available in English. For now you'll have to make do with Japanese!

まァ
バイトも初日だし
今日は無理しないで
とりあえず 結衣と
接客だけやって
くれればいいから
はァ・・・・
接客・・・・
それじゃ
わかんないことは
先輩の私に
聞いてね？
新入りさん！

う・うん・・・・
頑張ります・・・・
もォ～～～
シャキっとしてよォ
やれやれ
そんな調子でウチの
バイトが勤まるかな
え!?
が・頑張りますから!!
シャキっとしますから!!
クビだけはカンベンして
ください!!
い・いや
そこまでは
言ってないよ!
もォ!
お父さんが言うと
冗談になんないの!
パソコンが
必要なんです～
スマンスマン
大丈夫だから
じ・じゃ結衣
あとはよろしくな
父さん 仕込みが
残ってるから
はぁい!

よくよく考えたらオレ
フロ掃除以外のバイトって
初めてなんだよな…
カチン
コチン

ぜってー失敗は
できねェぞ!!
すっげー頑張って
認めてもらわ
ないと!!

大和くん
そんなに緊張してたら
一日もたないよ?
ハ・ハイ!!
だから…

カラン
カラン
いらっしゃいませ
――!

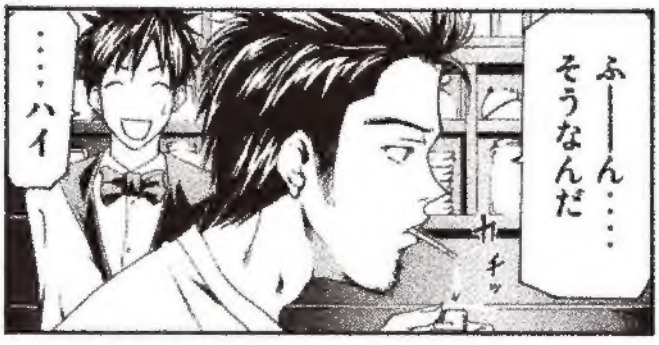
き…
来たぁ

ホラ
接客接客!
ハ・ハイ

ガタッ

いっ・・・・
いらっしゃいませ〜〜〜・・・・

あれ・・・
いつもの女の子じゃねーんだ
え!?
あの・・今日から入った秋月大和です!!
宜しくお願いします!!


ふ――ん・・・
そうなんだ
・・・・ハイ

・・・・・・・・・
・・・・・・・

Gacha Gacha
THE NEXT REVOLUTION

HIROYUKI TAMAKOSHI

JUST ONE OF THE GIRLS

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REVENGE OF THE HORI CLAN

ORIGINAL STORY BY FŪTARO YAMADA
MANGA BY MASAKI SEGAWA

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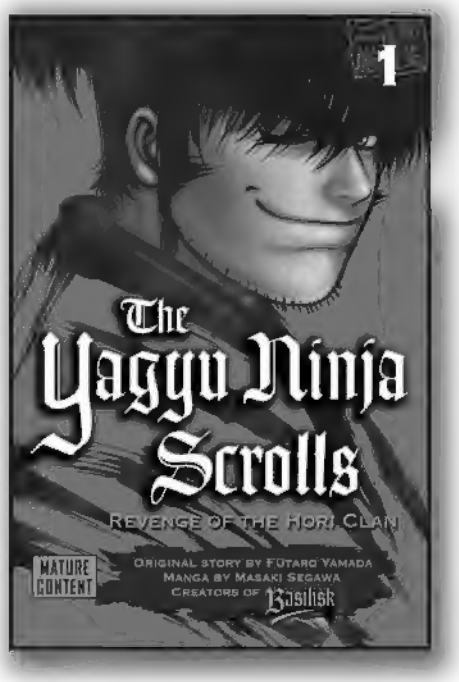
- **From the creators of *Basilisk***



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